



Attack and Defence

The fifth and final session from
the world-famous chess school

Attack and Defence

How Creative Thought Develops in a Chess Player

Mark Dvoretsky and Artur Yusupov

With contributions from:

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Symbols

+	check
++	double check
x	captures
0-0	castles kingside
0-0-0	castles queenside
!!	brilliant move
!	good move
!?	interesting move
?!	dubious move
?	bad move
??	blunder
1-0	the game ends in a win for White
1/2-1/2	the game ends in a draw
0-1	the game ends in a win for Black
(n)	nth match game
(D)	diagram follows

Preface

Mark Dvoretsky

The book you have before you is the fifth and final volume in the series 'School for Budding Chess Champions', based on material from the Dvoretsky/Yusupov school for gifted young chess players.

Our little school existed for only three years (1990-2). Its sessions were attended by 10-15 young people. Nearly all of them first joined us at the age of 12-15 years. Five years on, I am proud to be able to say that eight of our students have become grandmasters, some of them very strong ones enjoying world fame. Here are their names: Alexei Alexandrov, Inna Gaponenko, Vasily Emelin, Vadim Zviagintsev, Ilakha Kadymova, Sergei Movsesian, Ella Pitem and Peter Svidler. In the very near future I am sure that Vladimir Baklan and Peter Kiriakov will attain the grandmaster title too. Hardly any other children's chess school can boast of such a high success rate.

In listing the school's achievements I am nonetheless perfectly aware that the successes were gained first and foremost by the students themselves and their regular coaches. Was there much that we could teach (for instance) Peter Svidler – three-times Russian Champion – at the three ten-day sessions of the school which he attended (the second, fourth and sixth)? The chief ingredients of Svidler's successes were of course his own immense talent and the help of his outstanding coach Andrei Lukin.

Yusupov and I saw our role as that of stimulating the young players' further development; helping them to come to terms with themselves, with their own strengths and weaknesses; formulating plans for the future; discussing the problems they faced at the chessboard, and the means of overcoming them; pointing out the basic policies and methods for perfecting their chess. That was all. It was not an immense amount, but it was not negligible either. The students' results confirm that this was the right approach, and that as a whole we performed our task successfully. Among other things, it was at a session of our school that Peter Svidler was advised by me to turn to Lukin for assistance.

This same approach is reflected in our books. We have not attempted to write textbooks to clarify this or that topic fully and precisely. Our aim has been to equip our readers with high-quality material and a variety of ideas conducive to independent thinking and work along the lines we have mapped out. The ideas are not all our own; they include those of other specialists (particularly trainers working together with us at the school). Naturally this method of exposition requires readers to adopt an inventive (and sometimes critical) attitude to the text they are studying; it is unsuited to lovers of ready-made precepts. To judge from the popularity of our books, a great many chess players like this approach.

The issues discussed in this book are not confined narrowly to chess; they are all situated on the border between chess and psychology. The chess player's thoughts at the board, the characteristic processes of decision-taking in a variety of situations – this, in a nutshell, is the basic content of the book. Many of the examples that are offered for your attention are highly complex and ambiguous; they require deep investigation of a position, ingenuity and bold, risk-taking actions. In comparison with its predecessors, then, this volume has less to do with instruction and more to do with creative problem-solving.

The division of the book into six parts is to some extent arbitrary, since the themes of the chapters are closely interrelated. It is obvious, for example, that the discussion about the accurate and deep analysis of variations is merely begun in Part 1 and continues right to the end of the book.

The analysis of variations is by no means an omnipotent force; in the course of a game a player needs to guess as well as calculate. The problem of developing your intuition has hardly attracted any serious discussion in chess literature. I am not a professional psychologist and make no claim to treating the subject scientifically, but I hope my practical ideas and recommendations will prove useful to the reader.

Many chess players make the serious mistake of devoting their free time solely to the study of opening theory. The fact is that errors committed at later stages have just as much bearing on the result as a poor start to the game. Some weaknesses which can and must be overcome with intensive will-power and persistence are shared by chess players of all levels. To emphasize this point, the book includes critical analyses of games not only by young masters and candidate masters but also by high-ranking

grandmasters – such as Artur Yusupov (who performs the task himself, in Chapter 9, Missed Brilliancy Prizes) and Garry Kasparov.

Opening theory is subject to speedy revision, so that opening manuals are sometimes out of date even before they are published. By contrast, astute observations and conclusions about the game of chess as a whole retain their value over a period of many years. You may confirm this by acquainting yourself with the two articles written some decades ago by Benjamin Blumenfeld, a master who was also a penetrating researcher into practical chess psychology. Don't be put off by the mode of presentation, which seems slightly outdated by present-day standards. The writer's thoughts are what matters, and they remain as relevant as ever.

I have already devoted one book – *Secrets of Chess Tactics* – to the problems of attack and defence. However, these themes are inexhaustible, and I hope that the fresh material discussed in the relevant chapters will be useful to you.

In what has become in this series the traditional concluding chapter, Yusupov analyses some games by our students. Whereas in our previous books he placed the emphasis on instructive errors, this time the grandmaster concentrates on displaying the young players' creative achievements. The book ends with a brilliant game by Vadim Zviagintsev, which the experts rated as the best in *Informator 62*. It is extremely rare for young players to receive this honour, given the jury's susceptibility to titles and big names. I wish our readers the same competitive and creative success as our best students. I hope you will be aided in this by ideas that you derive from the books in our series.

1 The Technique of Analysis and Decision-Taking

Mark Dvoretsky

What do we think about during a game of chess? We look for promising possibilities, compare them with each other, work out variations, try to neutralize our opponent's counterplay, and so forth.

All this is a creative process which admits of no recipes suited to all cases. Yet there definitely do exist rules, precepts of thought, which in some way help us to organize and regulate this process, to make it more reliable, to avoid the simplest mistakes and economize our thinking time – in short, to raise the level of our decision-taking.

A fair amount has been written on this subject. Grandmaster Alexander Kotov, for example, has set out his ideas on the technique of calculation in *Think Like a Grandmaster*. I would also advise you to consult the interesting article by Mikhail Krasenkov included in the next chapter; and also the old but by no means antiquated articles by Benjamin Blumenfeld, a master

who perceptively investigated the psychology of chess thought.

The problem of thinking about moves has always interested me. I have devoted a number of articles to it, as well as several chapters in my previous books. I have studied some methods and devices (for example 'prophylactic thinking' – see the book *Positional Play*) in considerable detail, others only in broad outline. I cannot formulate a precise scheme for optimal thinking at the chessboard (I am convinced that in principle no such scheme exists), but I will give you some advice which I hope will be of use to you in future contests.

The thought-processes which we are going to examine can be conveniently divided into two categories:

- 1) Methods of searching for a move and calculating variations;
- 2) Means of economizing time and effort; rational thinking.

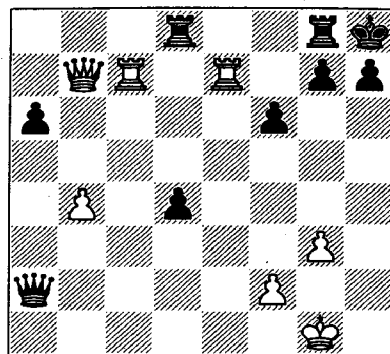
Technique of searching for moves and calculating variations

1. Candidate moves

Kotov was perhaps the first to highlight this device of calculation. He recommended that you should **immediately identify all the possible candidate moves, not just for your first move but for subsequent ones – and not just for yourself but for your opponent.** If you read the article by Krasenkov that I mentioned, you will see that this principle (like others that we shall discuss) by no means always ‘works’. Nonetheless it is very good advice for many situations.

Why is it so important to apply the principle of ‘candidate moves’? In the first place, it **helps us to survey the variations rationally, to single out all the continuations that have to be calculated.**

Black is two pawns up, but his opponent’s pieces are very active. The g7-pawn is under attack. If Black defends it with 33...♗b1+ 34 ♖g2 ♗g6, then after 35 ♠cd7 d3 36 ♗d5 White wins back the d-pawn and will probably soon liquidate to a drawn ending with three pawns against two on the same



B

Alexander – Euwe
Nottingham 1936

side. Also 33...♗d5 34 ♗xd5 ♠xd5 35 ♠ed7 leads to roughly the same thing. The attacking try 33...♠d5 (reckoning on 34 ♠xg7 ♠xg7 35 ♠xg7 ♗b1+ 36 ♖g2 ♠h5) is refuted by 34 ♠c8!. Finally, if Black plays 33...♠b8, White should not reply 34 ♗e4? ♠xb4 (threatening 35...♗b1+) or 34 ♗a7? ♠xb4 35 ♠xg7 ♠b1+ 36 ♖g2 ♗d5+, but 34 ♗c6! is a perfectly playable move (34...♠xb4 35 ♠xg7!; 34...♗b1+ 35 ♖g2 ♗xb4 36 ♗xf6!; 34...d3 35 ♖g2!? d2 36 ♠cd7).

I wouldn’t say it was essential to work out all these variations accurately. You only need to satisfy yourself that the opponent retains possibilities of defence. The point is that Black has just one more resource available: he can simply

push his passed d-pawn, allowing ♠xg7 and defending h7 from b1 with his queen. This is the most forcing and hence the most tempting line, and naturally the one to examine first. It is important to decide whether the opponent has perpetual check. If not, Black should definitely play this line as he will acquire an overwhelming material plus. If there is no escaping the perpetual, he can go back to the other continuations and study them more thoroughly.

33 ... d3!

The precise order of moves is important. On 33...♗b1+? 34 ♖g2 d3, White has the additional possibility of 35 ♠cd7! d2 36 ♠xd8 ♠xd8 37 ♗d7!, leading to a draw. After the text-move, however, 34 ♠cd7 is useless, as after 34...d2 the pawn will queen with check.

34 ♠xg7 ♠xg7

35 ♠xg7 ♗b1+

Black’s next move will be 36...d2. This is where we have to concentrate on picking out the candidate moves. White has two ways of continuing the attack: 37 ♠g4 (threatening mate on g7) or 37 ♗f7 (with the idea of 38 ♠g8+ or 38 ♠xh7+). In each case the white king may be on either g2 or h2. So there are four possibilities, and it was essential to calculate all of them before playing 33...d3.

Let us begin with the queen’s move to f7:

a) 36 ♖h2 d2 37 ♗f7 ♗f5!. Now 38 ♠xh7+ is impossible as the rook is taken with check, while on 38 ♠g4 Black has the decisive 38...♗xf2+ 39 ♖h3 ♗f1+ 40 ♖h2 ♗h1+! (or 40...♗e2+ 41 ♖h3 ♗xg4+!).

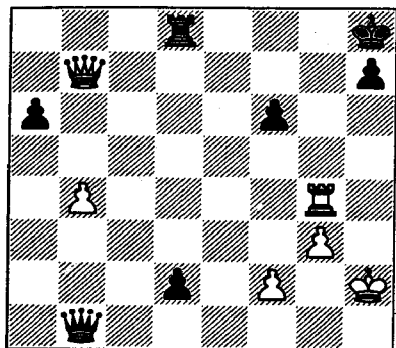
b) 36 ♖g2 d2 37 ♗f7. This time 37...♗f5? is bad due to 38 ♠xh7+! ♗xh7 39 ♗xf6+ ♗g7 40 ♗xd8+ and 41 ♗xd2, when White comes out a pawn up, while the line 37...d1♗? 38 ♠g8+! ♠xg8 39 ♗xf6+ leads to perpetual check. However, Black can win by inserting 37...♗e4+!. Then 38 ♖h2 ♗f5 transposes to variation ‘a’. If 38 f3, the simplest answer is 38...♗xf3+! 39 ♖xf3 d1♗+ leading to a quick mate, though another possibility is 38...♗e2+ 39 ♖h3 ♗f1+ 40 ♖h2 ♗h1+! 41 ♖xh1 d1♗+ 42 ♖h2 ♠d2+ 43 ♖h3 ♗h1+ 44 ♖g4 h5+! 45 ♖f4 ♠d4+ 46 ♖e3 ♗g1+.

We will now look at the rook’s move to g4.

c) 36 ♖g2 d2 37 ♠g4 ♗h1+! 38 ♖xh1 d1♗+ and 39...♗xg4.

d) 36 ♖h2 d2 37 ♠g4 (D).

The h1-square is controlled by the white queen. Black gets nowhere with 37...♗g1+? 38 ♖h3! ♗f1+ 39 ♖h4. The only possibility is 37...♗g6! 38 ♠xg6 hxg6. Let us see if White can give perpetual



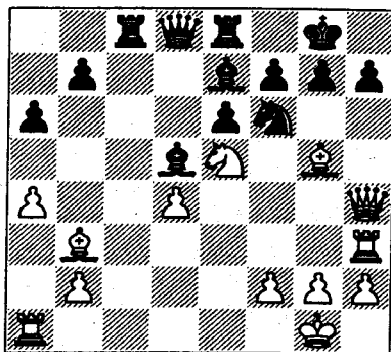
B

check with his lone queen: 39 ♖f7 d1 ♖ 40 ♖xf6+ ♔h7 41 ♖e7+ (after 41 ♖f7+ ♔h6 42 ♖f4+ ♔g7 43 ♖e5+, Black has either 43...♔h7 44 ♖e7+ ♔h6 – see the main line – or 43...♔f7 44 ♖f4+ ♔g8 45 ♖c4+ ♖d5) 41...♔h6 42 ♖h4+ (after 42 ♖e3+ ♔h5! 43 ♖e5+ g5 the checks run out) 42...♖h5, and the rook cannot be taken because the queen is pinned. We can now see why, after 36 ♔g2 d2 37 ♖g4, the reply 37...♖g6? would be insufficient to win; the sole correct move is 37...♖h1+!

It remains to add that in the game, after 36 ♔h2 d2, White resigned (0-1).

Thus, a preliminary review of the candidate moves ensures precision and reliability in our calculation of variations. However, the 'exploratory function' of this method is

even more important. It enables us to avoid a typical mistake that nearly all chess players make time and again – plunging straight into analysing the first continuations that come into their head. That way some powerful possibilities may be neglected, resulting in a great waste of time and energy. If we have concentrated on seeking out all the sensible candidate moves, we sometimes discover resources the existence of which we never suspected at the outset.



W

Najdorf – Kotov
Mar del Plata 1957

The first thing that strikes you is that White can win the h-pawn with check: 21 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 22 ♖xh7+ ♔f8. There is nothing to calculate here – the resulting position just needs to be assessed. White has no

chance of giving mate (the king-side is solidly defended by the f6-bishop). Black keeps some positional compensation for his pawn, in the shape of control of the c-file and the weakness of the white pawn on d4.

Another, more tempting, continuation is 21 ♖g4. Obviously 21...h6? 22 ♖xh6+ leads to mate. It is also easy to see the variation 21...♖xb3? 22 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 23 ♖xh7+ ♔f8 24 ♖h8+! ♔e7 25 ♖xg7 and wins. However, we must not jump to conclusions. First we need to check that we have taken all the defensive resources into account (we have to look for the opponent's candidate moves as well as our own). We find the sole defence in 21...♔f8!. There are various ways to win the h-pawn, but none of them are entirely clear. For instance, after 22 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 23 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 24 ♖xf6 gxf6 25 ♖xd5 exd5 26 ♖xh7 ♔g8, the outcome is obscured by the activity of Black's rooks on the open c- and e-files.

Of course, no one guaranteed that we could do more than win a pawn here. The knight's move to g4 looks very strong, especially if we notice that after 21...♔f8 White can continue the attack with 22 ♖h6!?. Wait, though. A little belatedly (which is quite excusable – 21

♖xf6 and especially 21 ♖g4 were too tempting) let us recall the principle of 'candidate moves', and look for some other possibilities for White.

It turns out that there are two other methods of conducting the attack:

a) 21 ♖d1 (with the idea of 22 ♖h5).

b) 21 ♖c2 (with the threat 22 ♖xh7+ and justified by the variation 21...♖xc2 22 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 23 ♖xh7+ and 24 ♖xc2).

Method 'b' is more forcing, so we should consider this one first.

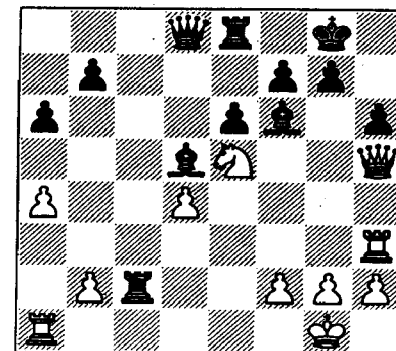
21 ♖c2!! ♖xc2

Not 21...g6 22 ♖xf6, or 21...h6 22 ♖xh6. On 21...♔f8, White wins with 22 ♖xh7 ♖xh7 23 ♖h5!.

22 ♖xf6 h6

23 ♖h5! ♖xf6 (D)

Or 23...♖f8 24 ♖xg7.



W

24 ♖xf7+ ♔h7
Or 24...♔h8 25 ♜xh6+! gxh6 26 ♘g6#.

25 ♜xh6+! ♔xh6
26 ♖g6#

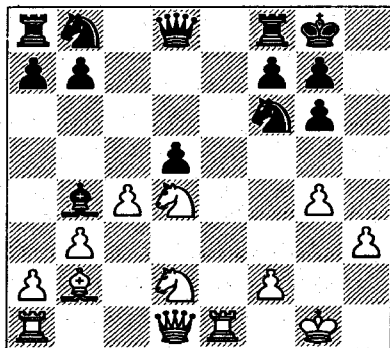
This winning combination (as pointed out by Igor Zaitsev) immediately settles the question of the strongest way to continue the attack. There is no need to analyse any of the other lines. As you see, it is not only important to draw up a complete list of candidate moves; you must also decide on the best order in which to examine them.

The combination would be much easier to find if White clearly had no other promising possibilities. However, in this case he did have some, and they began by distracting our attention. In such circumstances you could easily miss 21 ♙c2!! even if you were an excellent tactician. The search technique that we have been practising ('candidate moves') significantly increases our chances of success.

However, no technique is any help if a player lacks keen combative vision. This quality must be developed and trained by regularly solving appropriate exercises.

In the actual game, Miguel Najdorf played the weaker 21 ♙d1?!. His opponent could have parried

White's threat by giving advance protection to the f7-point: 21...♞c7! (22 ♙h5 ♘xh5 23 ♖xh5? ♙xg5). Instead Kotov carelessly played 21...♖a5?, and after 22 ♙h5! the white attack was irresistible. The concluding moves were: 22...♞ed8 (22...♘xh5 23 ♖xh5; 22...♞f8 23 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 24 ♙xf7+ ♞xf7 25 ♖xh7+) 23 ♙xf7+ ♔f8 24 ♙h6! ♘e8 25 ♖f4 ♙f6 26 ♙xg7+ ♔e7 27 ♙xe8 ♙xg7 28 ♞xh7 1-0.



B

Dvoretsky – Butnori
Dubna 1970

I had mishandled the opening, and at this point Black could have obtained an excellent position with the simple continuation 16...dxc4! 17 bxc4 ♘c6, forcing 18 ♘4b3 or 18 ♘4f3 (not 18 ♘xc6? bxc6 19 ♞e2 ♖d3 threatening 20...♖xh3 and 20...♞d8). Without a doubt,

the game would not yet be won for Black – it would 'merely' be excellent. Alternatively he can try for more by playing his knight to e4, but in that case he is falling behind in development, so the consequences need to be calculated in detail. Luckily for me, my opponent made his move without properly examining the variations.

16 ... ♘e4?

Clearly White must sacrifice the exchange (17 ♘4f3? ♘xd2 18 ♘xd2 dxc4 is thoroughly bad for him), but which way should he do it? Once we locate all the candidate possibilities, it is fairly easy to decide which is strongest:

- a) 17 ♞xe4 dxe4 18 ♘xe4;
- b) 17 ♞xe4 ♙xel 18 ♖xel dxe4 19 ♖xe4;
- c) 17 ♘e4 ♙xel 18 cxd5.

In the first two cases, all we can speak of is some compensation for the lost exchange; whereas in the third case a double-edged position arises, and it is not clear whose game is preferable.

So you see that sometimes we are not looking for candidate moves but for 'candidate possibilities' – short variations which may begin identically.

17 ♘xe4! ♙xel
18 cxd5!

White's pieces dominate the centre, and his d5-pawn is preventing

the normal development of Black's queen's knight.

18 ... ♙b4
18...♙a5!?
19 ♘f3! ♞e8
20 ♖d4 ♙f8

What does Black want to do now? To bring his knight out to d7, of course. Can this be stopped?

21 ♘e5! ♖b6?!

Black would lose at once with 21...♘d7? 22 ♘xd7 ♖xd7 23 ♘f6+!. It was worth considering 21...f5, but White would then have maintained the advantage with 22 ♘g3 ♖f6 23 f4.

22 ♖d3

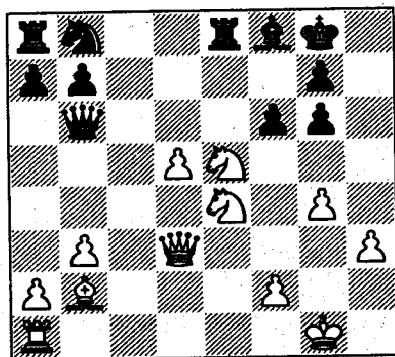
Black has no moves. If 22...♘a6, then 23 ♘d7 followed by 24 ♘f6+ is decisive.

I must explain that despite the obvious excellence of my position, I wasn't at all in an optimistic mood. In the Dubna Young Masters' Tournament I had been playing atrociously, constantly committing oversights which were chiefly due to a lack of patience, a wholly unjustified haste in the taking of decisions. In the previous game I had thrown away what was virtually a won position with a single hurried move. In the present game, my opening play had been abysmal. It was sheer luck that my opponent had handed me the initiative for the proverbial 'mess of pottage'.

"Sure", I thought, "I've got a decent position, but I bet I'll lose my nerve again and make some blunder. Well, whatever he plays, I'm going to take a full five minutes over my next move! I've got loads of time in hand – I must use it."

After a long think, Butnoriu played:

22 ... f6 (D)



W

This actually disconcerted me. "It's quite clear – I take on g6, he develops his knight on d7, and *then* there'll be something to think about, but right now, what am I supposed to do with my five minutes? Well never mind, I'm sticking to my word all the same."

Just for something to do, I started going over some other possibilities apart from 23 ♖xg6. (There we are – candidate moves!) The result was that after thinking

for not just five minutes but twenty, I worked out a winning combination.

23 d6!! ♙xe5

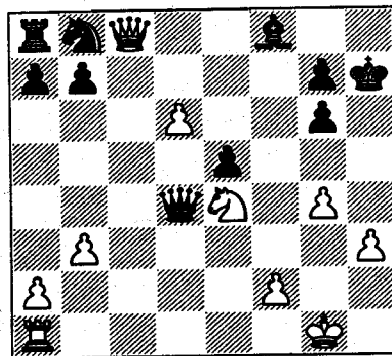
On 23...fxe5 I intended 24 ♖f6+! (24 ♖g5! is equally strong) 24...gxf6 (24...♙f7 25 ♖xe8 ♙xe8 26 ♙xg6+ ♙d8 27 ♙g5+!) 25 ♙xg6+ ♙h8 26 ♙xe8 ♙xd6 27 ♙c1 ♙e7 28 ♙c8, and Black is defenceless.

24 ♙xe5 fxe5

25 ♙c4+ ♙h7

26 ♙c8 ♙d4 (D)

26...♙xd6 27 ♖g5+ and mates.



W

27 ♖g5+

White takes it into his head to give up another rook for luck. The sacrifice leads to a forced mate. In principle, however, this kind of "combination for combination's sake" (the phrase is Grandmaster Vladimir Simagin's) should on no

account be commended. After all, on the elementary 27 ♙e1 (with threats of ♙xf8 and ♙xb7) Black could only resign. The best way is always the simplest!

27 ... ♙h6

28 ♖f7+ ♙h7

29 ♙xf8 ♙xa1+

30 ♙g2 ♖c6

31 ♙xa8 g5

32 ♖xg5+ ♙g6

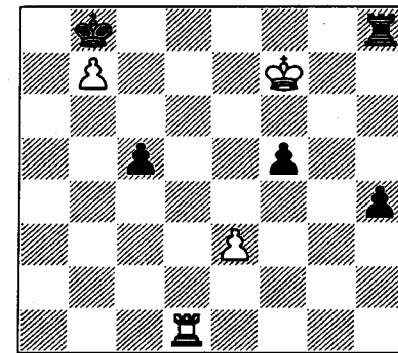
33 ♙e8+! 1-0

2. What could I have missed?

Sometimes during our analysis we need to come back to the task of looking for candidate moves. (We may simply have forgotten to perform that task at the right time; but then again, we can't always be sure that our list of possibilities was complete.) If the variations aren't turning out in our favour, it makes sense to go back to the beginning and ask, "What else could there be in the position? What idea could I have failed to notice?" Conversely, if the prospects look particularly bright, we should turn the question round – what other resources might the opponent have? **From time to time, try throwing off the burden of the lines you have analysed, and take a look at the position with fresh eyes. This practice often gives excellent results.**

Here is another aspect of the same rule. **Don't be in a hurry to calculate too far ahead. If problems arise that demand analysis in depth, don't rush to do it. First ask yourself how essential it is. Are there any improvements for yourself or your opponent at an earlier stage? New ideas at the start of a variation are a good deal more important than refinements at the end of it; they are far more relevant to the process of fighting.**

I once gave Artur Yusupov this study to solve:



W

A. Wotawa

Deutsche Schachzeitung 1938

Draw

Artur thought for a long time, vainly trying to find salvation among the intricacies of the unpleasant rook ending.

"Stop analysing!" I said to him at last. "Just look at the position and think what you might have missed."

All at once Artur hit on the solution.

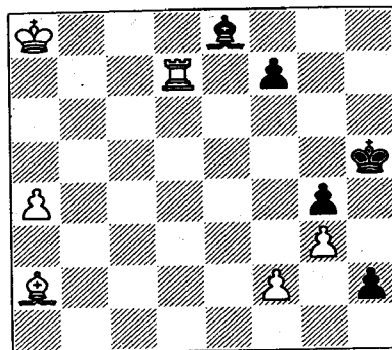
- | | |
|--------|------|
| 1 e4!! | fxe4 |
| 2 ♔g7 | ♞h5 |
| 3 ♔g6 | ♞e5 |
| 4 ♔f6 | ♞e8 |
| 5 ♔f7 | |

The king endlessly pursues the rook.

3. Should we re-check our calculations?

Another of Kotov's principles – to go down each branch of the 'tree of variations' once and only once – seems to me dubious. After all, we are not disinterestedly exploring possibilities – we are looking for the strongest moves. They don't always come into our head immediately, and sometimes there is no reason why they should do so before our analysis of the position has reached a certain point. Suppose the variations are not turning out right for us because some detail is lacking. It then dawns on us that this detail can be supplied by inserting some intermediate move which looked pointless at first sight.

How is White to stop the enemy pawn? In the event of 1 ♕d5 ♕xd7



W

F. Bondarenko and
A. Kuznetsov
*Commendation,
Gorgiev Mem 1977*

2 a5, Black manages to bring his bishop to f3: 2... ♖b5 3 ♔b7 ♕e2 4 a6 ♕f3 5 ♕xf3 gxf3 6 a7 h1♞, and Black has the advantage. The *zwischenzug* 1 ♞d5+ (with the idea of 1... ♔g6? 2 ♞d6+ and 3 ♕d5) is met by 1... f5! 2 ♞xf5+ ♔g6, for example: 3 ♞h5 ♔xh5 4 ♕d5 ♕xa4 followed by bringing the bishop to f3, or 3 ♕d5 ♔xf5 4 a5 ♕e5 5 ♕b7 ♕f7 6 a6 ♕d5, and Black wins.

There remains 1 ♞d1, but then 1... ♕xa4! 2 ♞c1 ♕c6+ 3 ♔b8 h1♞ leads to a drawn bishop endgame.

This appears to be the best White can do – but the appearance is deceptive. Let's not be in such a hurry to agree a draw. Let us try to invent something. This of course is

where some imagination is called for, but the accurate analysis we have already performed will also be of use.

We can find the solution if we think of the move 3 ♞xc6 (instead of 3 ♔b8) in the last-mentioned variation. Unfortunately it doesn't work, but the idea can be improved.

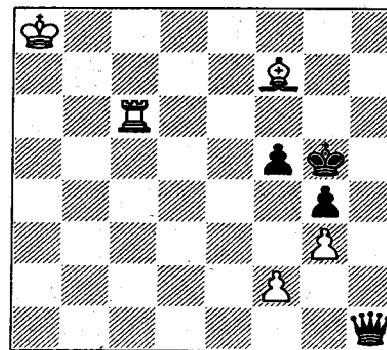
- 1 ♞d5+!! f5

We already know that this is the only move.

- 2 ♞d1! ♕xa4

Here again, our foregoing analysis established that Black has no choice. If the a-pawn stays on the board, White easily wins the bishop-op ending.

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 3 ♞c1 | ♕c6+ |
| 4 ♞xc6! | h1♞ |
| 5 ♕f7+ | ♔g5 (D) |



W

- 6 f4! gxf3

- | | |
|--------|----------|
| 7 ♞g6+ | ♔h5 |
| 8 ♞g8+ | ♔h6 |
| 9 ♞h8+ | and wins |

Calculating variations right to the end, one after the other, is, then, something we rarely have to do. After putting together the list of candidate moves, perform a quick assessment, a preliminary examination of them. Your provisional conclusions are sure to come in useful as you pursue your calculations further. You may be able to gauge how promising some particular variation is, and establish a rational order for your further analyses. Perhaps (as in Najdorf-Kotov, for instance) one move will prove so strong that it is simply not worth analysing the others.

4. Keep a mental note of the results of your calculations; terminate each variation with a definite conclusion

Sometimes a completely precise verdict is required, as when analysing 33...d3! in the Alexander-Euwe game. In that case an exact result – win or draw – had to be reached. If we had broken off the calculations only half-way through, with the verdict 'a bit unclear', we could not have taken the right decision.

However, a precise evaluation is by no means always essential. For example, you may come to the conclusion that a certain position arises by force but is difficult to assess and would require additional calculations. If necessary you will carry them out later, starting from the position in question and not repeating the analysis that led up to it. That is the point of retaining your conclusions from the variations already studied.

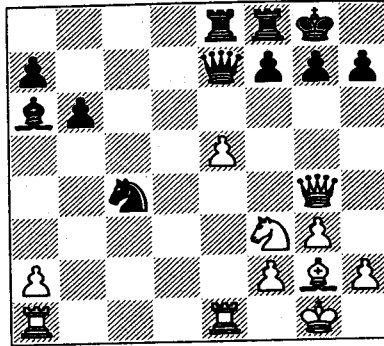
5. Prophylactic thinking

It often helps to begin thinking about the position by asking, "What does my opponent want? What would he play if it were his move?"

Readers familiar with my earlier books will surely need no convincing that a capacity for prophylactic thought is of immense value. All the same, let me give one more example.

What does Black want? Advancing the f-pawn would only weaken his position. A much better idea is to bring his bishop into play via c8 or b7. To do this, he first has to protect his knight with ...b5.

This tells us how White should handle the position.



W

Lerner – Lukin
USSR 1977

21 a4!

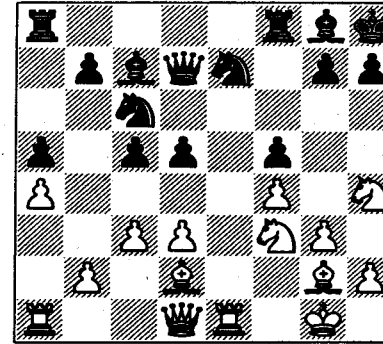
One threat is 22 ♗f1. If 21...b5, then 22 ♗f1! ♗c8 (22...♗c8 23 ♖d4 ♖xe5 24 ♗f5 f6 25 axb5 ♗b7 26 ♖xa7) 23 ♗f4 a6 24 ♗xc4 bxc4 25 ♗xc4 leaves White with an extra pawn.

The question arises whether White can reach the same position with 21 ♗f1 (and if 21...b5, then 22 a4). Which move-order is more accurate? Here we have to concentrate on looking for resources for the opponent. We are bound to give preference to the pawn move once we notice that 21 ♗f1 can be met by the unexpected 21...♗a3! – even though, as Utut Adianto pointed out, White still retains the better chances with 22 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 23 ♖g5! b5 24 ♖e4.

In the game, Konstantin Lerner didn't think about prophylaxis. He simply played 21 ♖ad1?!. His opponent replied 21...b5!, not worrying about 22 ♖d7 ♗c8! 23 ♖xe7 (or 23 e6 ♗xd7 24 exd7 ♗xe1+ 25 ♖xe1 ♖xe1+ 26 ♗f1 ♖d8) 23...♗xg4 24 ♖xa7 ♗xf3 25 ♗xf3 ♖xe5 with approximate equality.

6. What is the drawback to my opponent's move?

If he makes an unexpected and disconcerting move, ask yourself this question. Logical considerations sometimes help you to find the weak spot in your opponent's idea and the best way to counter it.



B

Ciocaltea – Liberzon
Netanya 1983

16 ...

♖ab8

Let us apply some 'prophylactic thinking' and ask ourselves what Black wants. Obviously, to play ...b5, open the b-file and pressurize the b2-pawn. How can this be opposed?

17 ♖c1!

Now 17...b5 will be answered by 18 axb5 ♖xb5 19 ♖c2. Then the bishop will go to c1, solidly defending the pawn, while the rook is transferred to e2 on the open file. A fine concept!

Let us now put ourselves in Black's place and try to detect the minus side of White's plan. With the white rook on c2, Black has ...d4 with the threat of ...♗b3. However, White replies c4, when the blocking of the queenside should be to his liking.

Another point is that after ♖c2 the a4-pawn is vulnerable. How can Black exploit this? If he is giving up the idea of ...b5, there is nothing for the rook to do on b8. So 17...♖be8 seems indicated, and if 18 ♖c2 then 18...♖d8!. On the other hand if White tries 18 ♗e3 b6 19 ♖c2?, our previous idea will work: 19...d4! (with tempo) and then ...♗b3.

17 ...

♖c8?!

This is another way to attack a4 (18 ♖c2 ♖b6), but a less effective one. What is its disadvantage? The

knight has left the kingside, where it was needed for defence.

18 ♖g5!

Threatening 19 ♖h5 and 20 ♖g6#.

18 ... g6?!

18...♗f6 is better. Now the a1-h8 diagonal is weakened. How can White utilize this weakness?

19 c4! d4

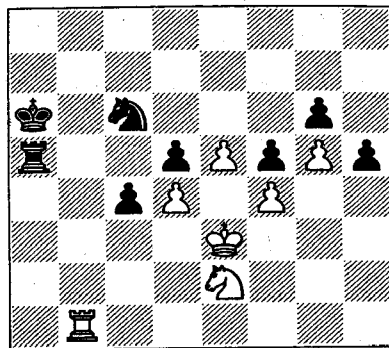
19...dxc4? is unplayable due to 20 ♗xc6. By forcing his opponent to close the queenside, White has freed his hands for active operations on the other wing. His advantage is now beyond doubt.

20 ♖e2 ♖b6 21 b3 ♗be8 22 ♖f2 ♖c8 23 ♗f3 ♗xe1+ 24 ♗xe1 ♗e8 25 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 26 g4! ♖d6 27 gxf5 ♖xf5 28 ♗e4 ♖e3 (28...♖ce7 is more tenacious) 29 ♗xc6! bxc6 30 ♖e4 ♖g4 31 ♖g2 ♖h6 32 ♖g5 ♖f8 33 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 34 ♖xc5 1-0

7. What am I trying to achieve?

This too is a useful question. Clarify your aims. Do you want to exchange a pair of pieces, seize an important square, prevent some active undertaking by your opponent, or what? A logical examination of the position may suggest a direction for further analysis.

Black has a healthy extra pawn. It is tempting to go into action at



B

Kotkov – Dvoretsky
Moscow Championship 1972

once with 54...♗a3+. That move must be adequate to win, and yet to me it seemed technically imprecise. Black's king is stuck on the edge of the board and at the moment is taking no part in the game. Here is a sample variation (though of course it is not forced), in which this defect makes itself felt: 55 ♖d2 ♖xd4? 56 ♖xd4 ♗d3+ 57 ♖c2 ♗xd4 58 ♗e1!, and White actually wins.

Black would first like to bring his king a bit nearer, so as to support the c-pawn or stop the opponent's passed e-pawn if the need arises. I therefore started considering a rook exchange.

54 ... ♗b5!?

Now if 55 ♗a1+, then after 55...♖b7 the king has moved closer

to the centre, and Black will still get his check on the third rank. The only question is: what happens if White exchanges on b5 and picks up the d-pawn with his knight. Let us try to find the answer, but it will have to be convincing and relatively uncomplicated. The initial position is too good to warrant the slightest risk.

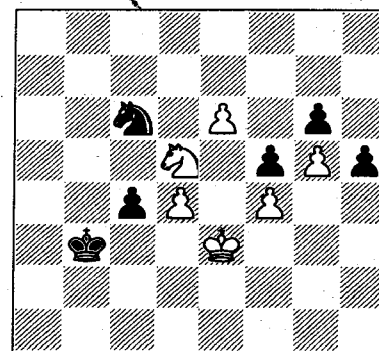
55 ♗xb5 ♖xb5

56 ♖c3+ ♖b4

57 ♖xd5+ ♖b3

58 e6 (D,

If 58 ♖d2 ♖x14, the outcome is obvious.



B

After the text-move, Black may play 58...♖e7!?, but first it is better to look at something more forcing – winning the white knight.

58 ... c3

59 ♖xc3 ♖xc3

60 d5

Quickly reaching this position in my calculations, I had a momentary fright – I didn't see how to stop the pawns. However, I then asked myself, "Where should my knight be going?" To d6 of course, and if possible with tempo. So its route became clear.

60 ... ♖a5!

61 e7 ♖c4+

62 ♖e2 ♖d6

This whole episode is instructive from the viewpoint of the technical exploitation of an advantage. Black is clearly more comfortable playing with his king on b7. Once it turns out that White cannot afford to exchange rooks, Black can make life easier for himself by playing 54...♗b5. For that reason it is worth making the effort and calculating the forced variation, especially if you are able to do it quickly and accurately (in my case it took about three minutes). I think we are now better placed to understand that **good technique is in many respects founded on short, precise tactical calculations.**

It remains for me to show how the game concluded: 54...♗b5! 55 ♗a1+ ♖b7 56 ♖f2 ♗b2 57 ♖e3 ♗b3+ 58 ♖f2 ♗b2 59 ♖e3 ♗b3+ (sealed). Another point about technical exploitation: in won positions it doesn't pay to force events before the adjournment – though

of course new regulations to eliminate adjournments make this advice redundant.

60 ♖f2 h4 61 e6 ♘c7 (this is where Black's 54th move brings results!) 62 ♖a8 h3 63 ♖g8 ♘e7 64 ♖h8 ♘d6 65 ♘g1 c3 66 ♘e3 c2+ (another way is 66...♖b1 67 ♘e2 h2 68 ♖xh2 c2 69 ♘d2 c1 ♖+ 70 ♘xc1 ♖b2+) 67 ♘d2 ♖g3! (but not 67...♖b1? 68 ♘e2 h2 69 ♘c1!) 0-1

Let us now proceed to examine the other aspect of decision-taking technique. This aspect is even less well studied.

Principles of rational, economical thinking

First, the most general statement of aims. When thinking about your move, your task is not at all to calculate every variation to the end and attain an exhaustive understanding of the position. You have one task, and one only: to take the correct decision, to play the best move. As far as possible, try to minimize your expenditure of time and effort. You should only calculate the minimum number of variations necessary for making the right decision.

How is this to be achieved? Here are some suggestions.

1. What should you think about first?

In Krasenkov's article you will find some interesting ideas on this topic, but they are partly at variance with my own recommendations. It is up to you to choose which ones you think are nearer the truth.

If there is an attractive continuation which forces the play, then of course it makes sense to begin your calculations with this line (as we saw, for example, when analysing Alexander-Euwe). It is usually sensible to start by examining the forcing moves such as exchanges, moves that win material, or the opposite – sacrifices. Calculating a concrete line is often simpler than appraising the consequences of a quiet continuation.

Once I was talking to Mikhail Katz, the famous draughts trainer who has coached an entire galaxy of Women's World Champions (Elena Altshul, Zoya Zadovskaya and others). He told me he taught his pupils to start by considering all possible moves that put men *en prise*. As a result it was extremely rare for them to miss unexpected combinations.

If you discover a combinative idea and feel it is probably sound, it makes sense to examine the opponent's weakest-looking answers

first. (Again, let us recall Alexander-Euwe. We did things in that order when we studied the position after Black's 35th move.) Quickly looking over the easiest variations, you narrow down the field of investigation, possibly restricting it to one or two continuations. After that it is easier, from the psychological viewpoint, to concentrate all your efforts on the crucial lines.

Conversely, if you suspect the combination will not work, begin by concentrating on the defence that looks best. If it refutes the combination, that is enough; there is no point in examining any other resources the opponent may have.

Obviously these recommendations are far from having absolute validity. In chess the most varied situations arise, and you may have to cope with them in completely different ways, but the guidelines I have given will apply to the majority of cases.

2. The 'emergency exit'

I shall not give any examples of this, but simply explain the idea.

Suppose an obscure position has arisen and it is not clear who is better. You start to work out a complex combination and notice that at some point, if you want, you can

force perpetual check or (for instance) a level endgame. You are now justified in breaking off and saying "Right, then – I'll play the combination! I've got perpetual check in hand. There should be some more attacking chances, but I won't finish calculating them – I can do it later, or force the draw if there's nothing else for it."

The 'emergency exit', which allows you to do without calculating the critical variation in advance, doesn't have to be a forced draw. It is enough to note that somewhere along the line you have a move which may actually be second-rate but which you nonetheless judge to be perfectly acceptable. A few moves later you will find it much easier to decide whether to go into the main variation or be content with a reasonable deal.

3. Process of elimination

Sometimes there is no point in precisely calculating the line you intend to play. You just need to conclude that the line makes some sense, that there is no immediate refutation, and that you have nothing better anyway – all other moves are bad. By such means you may be able to save a great deal of time and energy. Some chess players are prone to

forget this method of selecting a move, or apply it ineptly.

In the years 1973-5 I worked with Valery Chekhov, preparing him for the World Junior Championship. We gave a lot of attention to perfecting his technique for decision-taking and especially for making economical use of his thinking time (Chekhov was then a time-trouble addict). An instructive episode occurred in one of the training games we played.

Dvoretsky – Chekhov

Moscow 1974

Réti Opening

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | ♖f3 | ♘f6 |
| 2 | g3 | g6 |
| 3 | b3 | ♙g7 |
| 4 | ♙b2 | |

Valery had a reason for asking me to play this particular system (of which I didn't know the theory at that time). This was how Alexander Kochiev, his chief rival in the coming qualifying tournament, liked to play with White. It must be said that this kind of opening scheme, for all its unassuming appearance, contains a fair amount of poison. If Black has no precise plan, he can soon land in a strategically difficult situation – he only needs to commit two or three barely perceptible inaccuracies.

That is exactly what happened, for example, in the very important game **Yusupov-Zapata** played in the 1977 World Junior Championship at Innsbruck. The Colombian Alonso Zapata played magnificently in the second half of the tournament (scoring 6 out of 7) and took second prize. His only loss towards the finish was against the player who went on to win the Championship – but see how easy this win was for Yusupov: 4...d6 5 d4 0-0 6 ♙g2 ♘bd7 (if Black is intending ...e5, it is better to play it at once – 6...e5 – and meet 7 dxe5 by 7...♘fd7) 7 0-0 e5?! (7...♙e8!?!; 7...c6!?) 8 dxe5 ♘g4 9 ♘c3 dxe5 10 ♘d2 ♙e8 (10...f5 would be answered by 11 e4, but perhaps that was the lesser evil) 11 ♘c4 ♘b6 12 ♘xb6! cxb6 (12...axb6 13 ♙xd8 ♙xd8 14 ♙fd1, and 14...♙e8 fails to 15 ♘d5) 13 ♙xd8 ♙xd8 14 ♙ad1 ♙f5 (good ideas for Black are already hard to come by) 15 ♙xb7 ♙ab8 16 e4 ♙d7 17 ♙d5, and White went on to exploit his extra pawn in comfort.

4 ... 0-0

Occasionally even such a natural move as castling can prove a loss of time. The most precise move-order is 4...d6! (intending 5...e5) 5 d4 c5!. The point is that White has to do something about 6...cxd4 7 ♘xd4 d5, but 6 c4 can

be answered either by 6...cxd4 7 ♘xd4 d5 8 ♙g2 dxc4, or by 6...♘e4 with the unpleasant threat of 7...♙a5+ (if the moves 4...0-0 5 ♙g2, had been inserted, White could simply castle here). Nor does White achieve anything with 6 dxc5 ♙a5+ 7 ♘bd2 ♙xc5 (threatening 8...♘g4; 8 a3 would now be a mistake due to 8...0-0 9 ♙g2 ♘g4! 10 ♘e4 ♘xf2!!) 8 ♙d4 ♙h5 (8...♙c7 is also good) 9 ♙g2 ♘c6 10 ♙b2 ♙h3.

Another way of carrying out the same idea is 4...c5! (threatening 5...d5) 5 c4 d6! (with a view to 6...e5) 6 d4 ♘e4!.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 5 | ♙g2 | c5 |
| 6 | c4 | ♘c6 |
| 7 | 0-0 | d6 |

In such positions ...e5 is an unpleasant positional threat, since the b2-bishop would be shut out of the game. White could only activate it with e2-e3 and d2-d4, which would be difficult to carry out.

- | | | |
|---|------|-----|
| 8 | d4 | ♘e4 |
| 9 | ♘bd2 | |

The game Korchnoi-Gligorić, USSR-Yugoslavia match 1956 continued 9 e3 ♙g4 10 ♙c1 ♙xf3 11 ♙xf3 ♘g5 12 ♙xc6 bxc6 13 dxc5 dxc5 14 ♙xg7 ♙xg7 15 f4 ♘e4 with equality.

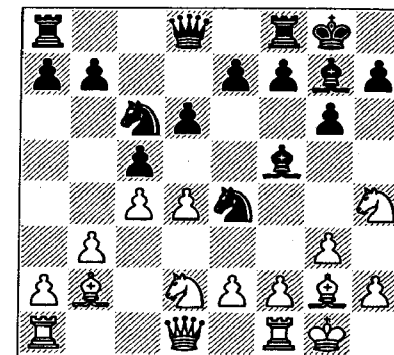
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|---|-----|-----|
| 9 | ... | ♙f5 |
|---|-----|-----|

After 9...♘xd2 10 ♙xd2 the pin on the a1-h8 diagonal disappears

and White will aim to gain a space advantage with d4-d5.

10 ♘h4!? (D)

The e4-knight is attacked. How would you continue for Black? What position would you aim for?



B

Sharp attempts like 10...♘g5? 11 f4 ♘h3+ 12 ♙h1 and 10...d5? 11 cxd5 ♙xd5 12 g4 clearly fail. 10...♘f6? is also bad; the space-gaining d4-d5 (either at once or after exchanging on f5) guarantees White a positional plus. That leaves only 10...♘xd2.

When playing 10 ♘h4, I was intending to investigate whether I could spoil Black's pawn formation by inserting an exchange on f5. The complications following 11 ♘xf5 ♘xf1 12 ♘xg7 might turn out in my favour, due to the powerful b2-bishop. But of course I didn't start working out the variations

beforehand; I merely satisfied myself that the simple 11 ♖xd2 (the 'emergency exit'!) was perfectly playable.

In general terms 11 ♖xf5 looks a suspect idea; therefore, as I have said before, we should begin by looking for the simplest refutation. There is no hurry to study the position where Black is the exchange up (even if that position is in his favour). First ask yourself what the candidate moves are. I saw the reply 11...♗xc4!, keeping a sound extra pawn for Black, and broke off my calculations at that point.

So 11 ♖xd2 is forced. Most likely Black should not allow the advance d4-d5 (although 11...♗d7 is possible) so he should choose between 11...cxd4 12 ♖xf5 gxf5 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 ♗xd4 and 11...♗xd4 12 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 13 ♗xb7. Which of these positions should Black prefer? What is required now is not calculation but sure positional assessment.

I think the second possibility is the right one. White has to conduct an attack on the kingside with h4-h5 or f4-f5 as appropriate, but the success of such an attack is very doubtful, because there are not all that many pieces left on the board and meanwhile Black is ready to counter-attack on the queenside at once by advancing his a-pawn.

Objectively the chances are about level here.

Taking on d4 with the pawn is weaker, since pawn weaknesses are formed in the black camp. The better pawn structure guarantees White a small but lasting advantage.

What happened in the game? After I played 10 ♖h4, Chekhov sank into thought. I spent a couple of minutes looking at the consequences of 10...♗xd2 11 ♖xf5. Then, having convinced myself (in his thinking time!) that that line was unplayable, I got up and walked about. There was nothing more to think about – it was up to my opponent to choose his move.

Ten minutes passed, then another ten. This rather began to irritate me. What was he thinking of? By process of elimination it is quite easy to see that Black must exchange knights. Why waste any time on it, then?

10 ... ♗xd2
11 ♖xd2

As you would expect, I made my move instantaneously, whereupon Chekhov once again immersed himself in thought for twenty-five minutes or so. Evidently he had still not come to a definite conclusion, or else some new doubts had arisen, bringing him back to the problem he had been struggling with.

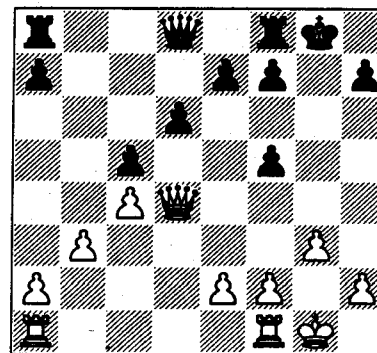
Of course, it was sheer waste to spend nearly an hour on such a relatively uncomplicated problem. What's more, Chekhov's solution was by no means the best.

11 ... cxd4?!
12 ♖xf5 gxf5
13 ♗xc6 bxc6
14 ♗xd4 ♗xd4?!

14...e5 15 ♗b2 ♖e7 was preferable.

15 ♖xd4 c5? (D)

After this Black has a difficult position. He had to choose between 15...♖d7, intending ...e5, and 15...e6, preparing ...d5. But then, there is nothing surprising in my opponent's weak play. If you use up too much time and energy at one particular stage, you won't have enough left to solve your problems afterwards.



W

16 ♖f4 ♖d7

17 ♗ad1

This threatens 18 ♗d5, winning a pawn.

17 ... ♖e6
18 ♗fe1

Black has to contend not only with ♗d5, but also with the line-opening move e2-e4.

18 ... f6

If 18...♖f6, White plays 19 ♗d5 e5 20 ♖d2 (from this variation we can see why 18 e3?! would have been less exact).

19 ♗d5 a5

Black could put up stiffer resistance with 19...♖e4 20 ♗xf5 ♖xf4 21 ♗xf4 a5. The advance of the a-pawn would promise him some counterplay in the endgame, but is not much use in the middlegame. White replies by organizing an attack on the king.

20 ♗xf5 a4
21 e4 axb3
22 axb3 ♗fb8
23 ♗e3

White has a strategically won position. He aims to open lines on the kingside with g4-g5.

After the game I naturally asked Chekhov what he had been thinking about when he took such a long time over move 10.

"Well, you know," he replied, "I was deciding what to do afterwards."

"But 10...♖xd2 was forced, wasn't it?"

"Yes, it was."

"Were you risking anything when you played it? Could it have lost outright?"

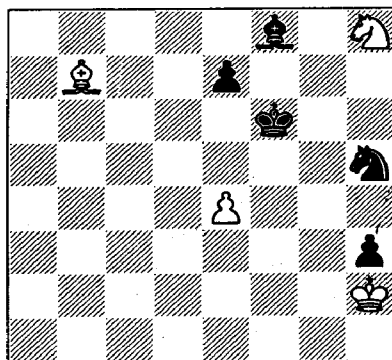
"No."

"Then why didn't you play it and think afterwards, in the position where you actually had to make a choice? With that position in front of you on the board, it would be easier – there would be less chance you'd miss something. In any case, you might have been able to do some of your thinking in my time. If you'd taken on d2 at once, I'd still have been looking at 11 ♖xf5."

Oddly enough, these arguments were new to Chekhov at the time. He was wholly unfamiliar with such time-saving devices as the process of elimination. But then, large numbers of players are prone to this same kind of inefficient thinking.

As a result of analysing his typical mistakes in the taking of decisions, Chekhov almost eliminated the desperate time-scrambles that had characterized his earlier games. In the following year (1975) he successfully came through the elimination process and went on to gain the distinguished title of World Junior Champion.

In Part 3 of *Secrets of Chess Training* I described an interesting type of exercise – playing out end-game studies over-the-board. In this way you can develop your imagination and your analytical technique; in particular, you can learn to make sensible use of the process of elimination.



W

G. Kasparian

1st Prize, '30 Years of Soviet Armenia' Tourney 1950

White's knight is trapped and will hardly escape alive. The attempt to extricate it with the aid of the bishop is easily refuted: 1 ♖d5? ♖f4 (not the immediate 1...e6? 2 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 3 ♖g6) 2 ♖c4 e6 3 ♖g3 ♖d6 and 4...♖g7. 1 ♖xh3 looks tempting in view of the lines 1...♖g7 2 e5+ and 1...♖g7 2 ♖g4 ♖f6+ 3 ♖f5. However, Black has

the much stronger 1...♖f4+ 2 ♖g4 e5! followed by ...♖g7. Playing it this way, White has no chance.

What else can he do? The only continuation to offer any hope is 1 e5+ ♖g7, and now either 2 ♖f3 ♖f4 3 ♖g3 or 2 ♖xh3 ♖xh8 3 ♖g4 ♖g7 4 ♖g5, trying to exploit the temporary lack of co-ordination of the black pieces. Of course, we have to be quick to unearth the little traps that make life easier for us in some variations, for instance 2 ♖xh3 ♖f4+ 3 ♖g4 and then 3...♖d3 4 ♖g6! or 3...♖e6 4 ♖f7! ♖xf7 5 ♖d5 with a draw.

Thus our first move is clear.

1 e5+! ♖g7

Now which way do we go? If 2 ♖f3? ♖f4 3 ♖g3, the black knight finds an extra square, g2. After 3...♖g2! 4 ♖xh3 ♖e3 our defensive resources are exhausted. Therefore we must capture the pawn at once.

2 ♖xh3! ♖xh8

An immediate draw would result from 2...♖f4+ 3 ♖g4 ♖e2 (we already know how to meet 3...♖d3 or 3...♖e6) 4 ♖g5 ♖xh8 5 ♖g6, and Black cannot stop the threatened 6 ♖f7 (e.g. 5...♖g8 6 ♖d5+).

3 ♖g4 ♖g7

4 ♖g5

Now Black must have a long think, as it is not at all simple to convert his extra knight into a win.

While he is at it, we shall work out some variations too. After 4...♖g8 5 ♖g6, he can only strengthen his position by 5...e6 6 ♖f6 ♖b4. Now 7 ♖c8? would be a mistake, as after 7...♖f8 the e6-pawn cannot be taken because of 8...♖e7+; while on 8 ♖d7 ♖e7+ 9 ♖g6 ♖d8 10 ♖c8 ♖h4 (zugzwang) 11 ♖d7 Black places his king on e7 and consolidates his forces. We must attack the pawn from the other diagonal: 7 ♖a6! ♖f8 8 ♖c4 ♖e7+ 9 ♖g6 ♖h4 10 ♖a2, and Black is unable to improve his position any further.

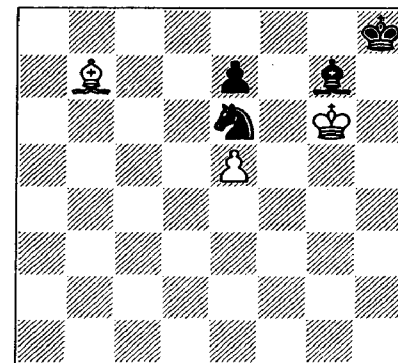
4...♖h7 does not alter matters: 5 ♖e4+ ♖g8 6 ♖g6.

Black's only remaining try is to remove his knight from g7:

4 ... ♖e6+

5 ♖g6 ♖g7! (D)

5...♖d8 is useless: 6 ♖d5 (intending 7 e6) 6...e6 7 ♖xe6! ♖xe6 8 ♖f7.



W

Seeing that 6 ♖f7? ♜d8+ is unplayable, White must move his bishop, renewing the threat of ♖f7. Black will reply 6...♜d8, and then we play 7 e6!. However, where should the bishop go?

If 6 ♜c6?, Black replies 6...♜d8 with tempo. Other tries that fail are 6 ♜a8? ♜c7, 6 ♜e4? ♜c5, 6 ♜f3? ♜d4 and 6 ♜g2? ♜f4+. That leaves only 6 ♜c8 or 6 ♜h1, but after 6 ♜c8? ♜d8! 7 e6 ♜g8 the black knight comes into play via c6 or b7. The bishop is compelled to remain on the long diagonal.

6 ♜h1!! ♜d8

7 e6! ♜b2

8 ♜d5!

Not 8 ♜a8? ♜xe6 9 ♖f7 ♜c7.

8 ... ♜a3

9 ♖h6 ♜c1+

9...♜g8 doesn't help: 10 ♖g6 ♖f8 11 ♖h7. An amusing sight: the black knight and king are prisoners in their own camp!

10 ♖g6 ♜d2

11 ♜h1!! (D)

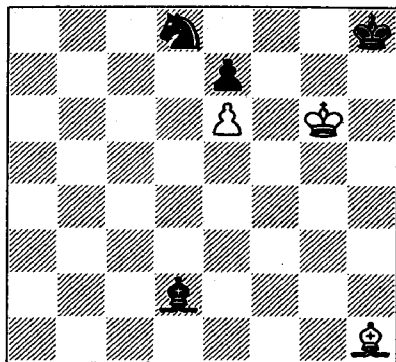
Again the only safe square for the bishop.

11 ... ♜e3

12 ♜d5!

The drawn result is now obvious.

We have thus traced roughly what a chess player would be thinking if he had to play the position in Kasparian's endgame study. As you



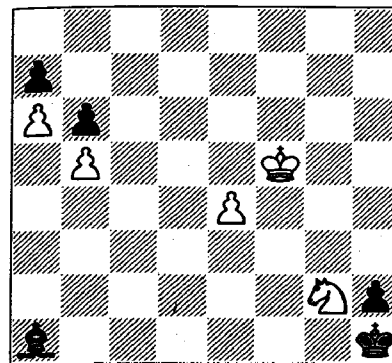
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can see, there is no need to analyse any long and complicated variations 'to the end'; it is much more important to examine the essential short variations precisely, while trying to register all the vital resources both for ourselves and for the opponent.

4. Comparison

This is quite a sophisticated device. Sometimes a quick choice of move can be made purely on the following lines: you realize that this move brings about a situation which is in no respect worse, and in some respect better, than the one you would obtain from a different continuation. For example, it was just in this way that we arrived at the correct order of moves (33...d3!, not 33...♚b1+?) in the game Alexander-Euwe.

Let us consider the following study.



W

F. Bondarehko and M. Liburkin
2nd Prize, All-Union Physical
Culture and Sport Committee
1950

White has two moves, 1 ♜h4 and 1 ♜e1. They come to the same thing in the case of 1...♜g1 2 ♜f3+ ♜g2 3 ♜xh2. However, after 1 ♜e1 ♜c3! White again has to play 2 ♜f3, whereupon 2...♜g2 brings about the same position only with the black bishop on c3. We don't even need to figure out whether this has any significance. Why should we give the opponent an additional defensive resource? What we should play is clear.

1 ♜h4!

When thinking about a move in practical play, you aren't called

upon to elucidate how the game is meant to end. Starting by comparing the two possibilities, you quickly place the knight on h4 and leave it to your opponent to look for a way to save himself. In his thinking time you can form a better picture of the ensuing variations.

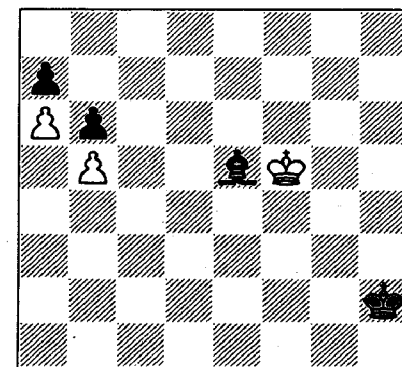
1 ... ♜g1

2 ♜f3+ ♜g2

3 ♜xh2 ♜xh2

Now if White goes after the a-pawn, Black will lock him in by running across to c7 with his king. How can this be prevented?

4 e5! ♜xe5 (D)



W

5 ♜e6!! ♜g3

6 ♜d7 ♜f4

7 ♜c8

Black's bishop gets in the way of his own king.

Observe what happens in the case of 4...♜c3 (instead of 4...♜xe5) 5

e6 ♖b4 6 ♜e5 ♜g3 7 ♜d5 ♜f4 8 ♜c6 ♜e5 9 ♜b7 ♜d6, and this time the king hampers the bishop: 10 e7! and wins.

From this last variation it emerges that if White mistakenly starts with 1 ♜e1?, the tempo Black gains by 1...♜c3! is of vital significance: 2 ♜f3 ♜g2 3 ♜xh2 ♜xh2 4 e5 ♜g3 5 e6 ♖b4 6 ♜e5 ♜f8 (or 6...♜g4) 7 ♜d5 ♜f4 8 ♜c6 ♜e5 9 ♜b7 ♜d6 10 ♜xa7 ♜c7 and draws.

5. Don't spend too long analysing extremely complex variations – in such cases, rely on your 'feel'

Quite often we encounter obscure situations where it is practically impossible to arrive at the truth in conditions of limited thinking time. Even if you find the right move, the price for using up an immense amount of energy may prove too high. Most likely you will have too little time and strength left for later decisions.

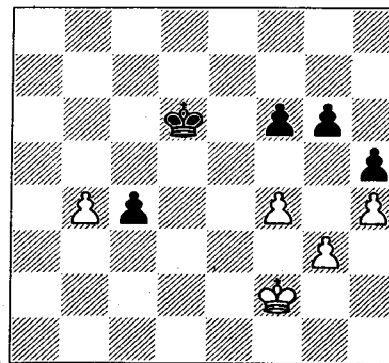
In what cases does it make sense to spend a lot of time thinking about a move? The answer is, when you understand that

you may find a precise solution to the problem that faces you, and that this solution will decisively affect the further course of the game – in other words, at the key moments of the struggle (the ability to identify them is very important); alternatively if you can't see a continuation that is at all acceptable, and need to discover one.

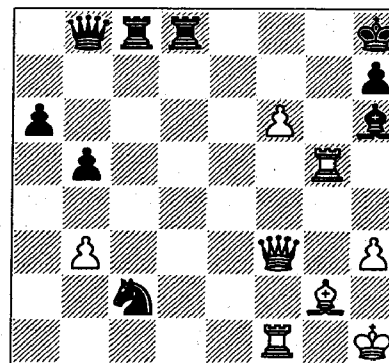
With that, this chapter closes. I don't recommend that you restrict yourself to the above advice; delve into the matter more deeply, evolve new principles of your own. Study examples which illustrate the rational technique of searching for moves and taking decisions. Solve special training exercises; analyse your own performance in tournament games. I hope that this manner of working at your chess will gain your interest. But are we talking about chess alone? After all, rational, precisely organized thought is of value in any sphere of life.

In conclusion, here are some quite difficult exercises for you to solve independently.

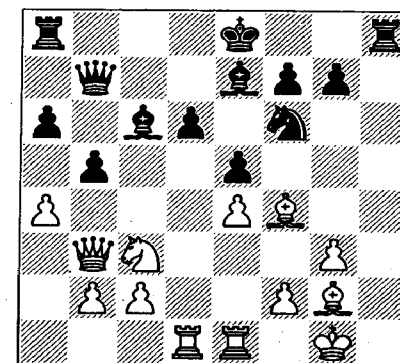
Exercises



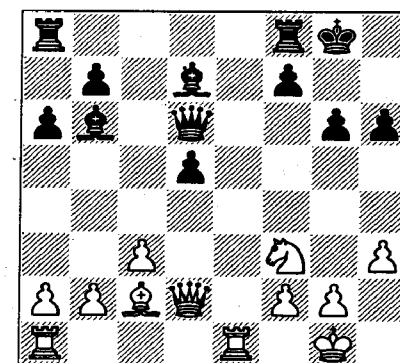
1. White to move



2. Evaluate 1 ♜h5



3. White to move



4. Black to move

Kotov's theory is also readily apparent: he ignores the problem of the order in which to examine the candidate moves, asserting that this "depends on the character and habits of the player, and on the peculiarities of the position". If, as Kotov assumes, it is obligatory to examine all the candidate moves, then of course the order hardly matters. In fact, though, there are many cases where, in the interests of economy, the analysis of some candidate moves can be dispensed with; it has no bearing on your decision, which can be reached simply by analysing the other moves. In such cases the order of analysis is of supreme importance.

In this chapter I shall try to present a more complex (though admittedly none too schematic) algorithm for calculation. This algorithm, which I shall illustrate by an example, is in fact used (unconsciously) by many chess players in obscure positions (of the 'jungle' type).

1. Define the aim of your analysis – in other words the criterion by which you will judge the variations and decide whether they satisfy you or not. The aim might be, for example, to attain a decisive material plus; to increase your positional advantage; to equalize the game; to put up resistance in a bad

position; and so on. The aim must be realistic, that is, it must be based on your assessment of the position and on intuitive considerations. Your sights may be raised somewhat higher if enough thinking time is available, or lowered if time is short.

2. Look for ideas to achieve the aim; select appropriate candidate moves, and (this is very important) decide on their order of priority; that is, decide which ones are most or least likely to succeed.

3. Analyse the variations (as deeply as possible) **in order of priority** (starting with those which seem most likely to achieve the aim). Similarly, at each point in the analysis where a choice arises, the order of calculation should depend on the priority of the possible moves (with your specific aim in view).

4. If you find a continuation which achieves the aim, what follows depends on your available thinking time. If time is short, the main part of your analysis should stop at this point (though there still remains the essential 'Blumenfeld re-check' – see point 8 below). If there is plenty of time, the aim may be adjusted (that is, raised); the list of candidate moves that remain to be considered may be revised, and

the analysis may continue. Should the new aim not be attained, you will fall back on the line already found.

5. If as a result of your analysis no way is found to achieve the aim, your further action depends once again on the clock situation. **With a time shortage** you must lower your sights, correct the list of candidate moves, and resume the analysis. It often happens that your new aim is already satisfied by a line you have examined – or a suitable continuation is relatively simple to find. The essential thing is not to make your move 'on spec', without any calculation.

6. If on the other hand there is plenty of time left, and your intuition suggests that the aim ought to be attainable (an accomplished player should put more faith in his intuition, which after all embodies his accumulated understanding of chess) – then you may (and must) deliberately perform a 'repeat analysis' of certain lines. In so doing you will be looking for new ideas to achieve the aim. Accordingly, you will find new candidate moves and 'candidate variations'. Let me explain what this means. In many variations, when analysing the first time round, you will already have discovered your opponent's strongest, or only, replies;

some forced lines of play will have emerged. Often the new idea – the new candidate – will not be found in the initial position but at the end of a series of moves; together with them, it will constitute a 'candidate variation'. You will now start calculating the new possibilities (compare point 3); this is stage two of the analysis. (Sometimes, though not often, you will go through this cycle a third time.)

Generally speaking, a repeat analysis is an admission of partial failure. Ideally, all ideas for pursuing your aim should be incorporated in stage one of the analysis. However, as we have seen, this is not always possible.

7. It may be that while analysing one variation you hit on a new idea, a new candidate move, which does not apply to this particular variation. In that case, decide where the new move comes in order of priority, but don't start to examine it before finishing with the line you are currently calculating. An exception may be made when it is obvious at first glance that the new idea is better (not just worthy of higher priority) than the line you are looking at.

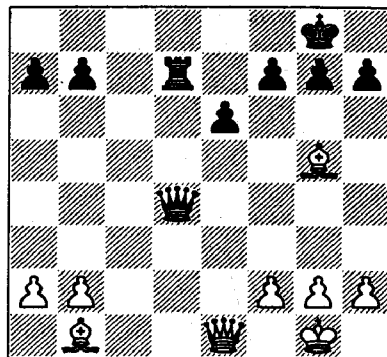
8. One of the major defects in the mental equipment of many players is 'chess blindness', a proneness to overlook elementary replies for the

opponent at a distance of one or two moves. An antidote to this failing is 'Blumenfeld's rule' (of which Kotov also speaks): on completing your calculations and making your decision, pause for a moment (write the move on your scoresheet) and look at the position with the fresh eyes of an outsider. Could the move you intend be a blunder leading to immediate disaster? Check that it is not, and only then make your move. If you see that the move *is* an error, you will have to renew your analysis. In this case, as a rule, you will need to lower your 'aim' and seek simplifications, since a crude oversight signifies your unreadiness for a complex struggle.

Blumenfeld's rule is well known to the majority of accomplished players, but ... in the heat of battle they often forget it.

I would like to illustrate the foregoing by showing the conclusion of one of my own games. I consider the winning manoeuvre I found in this game to be one of my best creative achievements.

The awkward placing of White's pieces and the weakness of his first rank prompted me to look for a forced win, in other words a large material gain (this constituted the 'aim' of my analysis). The idea was



B

Lagunov – Krasenkov
Dnepropetrovsk 1985

to combine attacks on the bishops with threats to penetrate on the back rank. I listed the following 'candidate moves' in order of priority:

- a) 23...♖d1.
- b) 23...♖b4.
- c) 23...♖a4.
- d) 23...♖g4.
- e) 23...♖e5.

Stage one of the analysis then began.

a) 23...♖d1 24 ♔f1, and now:

a1) 24...♖g4 25 ♔d2 ♖c4+ 26 ♖e2, and Black has nothing.

a2) 24...♖h5 25 ♔d2, and Black has two choices:

a21) 25...♖xh2 26 f3! ♖h1+ 27 ♔f2 ♖h4+ 28 ♔f1 ♖c4+ 29 ♖e2.

a22) 25...♖b5+ 26 ♔g1 ♖xb2 27 ♔e3 and then 27...♖c3 28 ♖f1, or 27...♖b4 28 ♖c1 ♔c7 29 ♖d1.

a3) 24...♖a4 25 ♔d2 ♖b5+ 26 ♔g1, transposing to 'a22'.

In the above variations, Black merely gains a second pawn – the aim is not achieved.

b) 23...♖b4 24 ♖c1 ♖c5 (or 24...♔c7 25 ♖d1) 25 ♔c2 ♔c7 26 ♖d2! f6 and after 27 ♔b3! or 27 ♔f4!, Black gains nothing.

c) 23...♖a4 24 ♔d2 (but not 24 b3? ♖a5), and there is nothing to be found.

d) 23...♖g4 24 ♔d2.

e) 23...♖e5 24 ♔e3.

In these last two lines, Black's possibilities are clearly exhausted.

So stage one of the analysis has failed to give the desired result. If Black were now short of time, he would have to revise his aim – let us say, by seeking the best way to win a second pawn. In that case, incidentally, he would have an extra 'candidate move' to consider:

f) 23...♖xb2 (which clearly falls short of the original maximum aim).

His choice would be between 'a21', 'a22' and 'f'. Fortunately, however, I had enough time in hand (the tournament was played at the 'good old' rate of 40 moves in two and a half hours), and I resolved to look for new ideas. The thought occurred to me to re-position my

queen behind the rook; I would have to do this without allowing White to defend d1 by ♔c2. The following 'candidate variations' suggested themselves:

A) 23...♖d1 24 ♔f1 ♖a4 25 ♔d2 ♔d6;

B) the same, but with 25...♔d5;

C) the same with 25...♔d4.

D) 23...♖a4 24 ♔d2 ♔d6;

E) the same, but with 24...♔d5;

F) the same with 24...♔d4.

G) 23...♖d1 24 ♔f1 ♖h5 25 ♔d2 ♖b5+ 26 ♔g1 ♔d6;

H) the same, but with 26...♔d5;

I) the same with 26...♔d4.

In all cases Black threatens ...♖d7. I quickly rejected the first trio of variations in view of 26 ♖e2. The third trio was discarded if only because of 27 ♔c3. In the remaining cases, what I discovered was as follows:

D) 23...♖a4 24 ♔d2 ♔d6 25 ♖e2! (25 ♔f1? ♖b5+ 26 ♖e2 ♖xb2 27 ♔d3 ♖d4) and then 25...♖d7 26 ♔e1 or 25...♖a6 26 ♖e1 (better than 26 ♖e3 ♖b6!), intending to defend everything with ♔c3 and ♔c2.

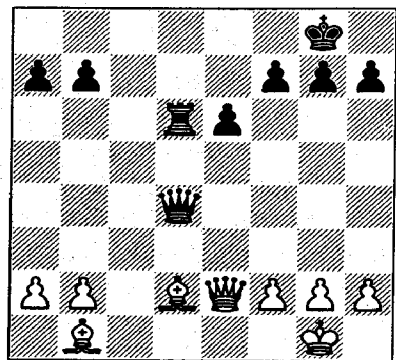
E) 23...♖a4 24 ♔d2 ♔d5 25 ♔e4! and then 26 ♔f3, as 25...♔e5? fails to 26 ♔xh7+.

F) 23...♖a4 24 ♘d2 25 ♕e2 (better than 25 ♘f1 ♖b5+ 26 ♕e2 ♖xb2 27 ♘d3 ♖xa2) and then 25...♗d7 26 ♘e1 or 25...♖a6 26 ♕e3!.

In all variations Black is at a loss how to win. So stage two of the analysis has also ended without producing the results.

Should Black after all renounce the maximum aim and revise his analysis accordingly? I decided to keep on searching, and I was not disappointed. An idea came into my head like a flash of lightning.

23...♖a4 24 ♘d2 ♗d6 25 ♕e2 ♗d4!! (D).

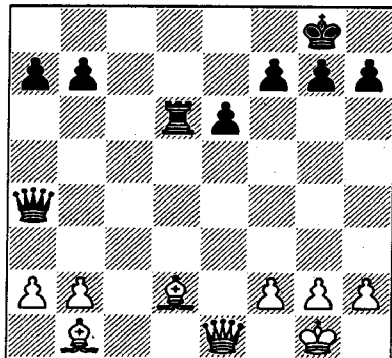


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Yes, the idea of going back with the queen is far from obvious. I believe it would have been impossible to find it without calculating many other lines first – without exploring the jungle of multiple attacks

and defences. On the other hand, the remaining calculation (stage three already!) is not complicated. With White's queen on e2, the black queen's penetration to d1 is decisive: 26 ♘e1 ♗d1 27 ♕e4 f5, or 26 ♖b5 ♗d8 27 ♘e1 ♗d1 28 ♖a5 b6.

The entire three-stage analysis (including re-checking) took exactly an hour. The game continued 23...♖a4! 24 ♘d2 ♗d6! (D).



W

Now my opponent from Novosibirsk unfortunately played 25 ♘f1(?), and after 25...♖b5+ he resigned (0-1). Black's main idea, alas, remained off-stage...

I may say with some pride that out of the many strong players (masters and grandmasters) to whom I have shown this position, only one managed to find the solution on his own. An interesting point is that even one of the latest

'Mephisto' model computers (admittedly not the strongest) failed to find the right continuation, though you might think this would not be difficult for a computer.

I am far from imagining that my proposed algorithm is applicable to all complex positions. Like any other algorithm, however – in fact,

like any method of organizing one's thinking – it can yield good results once it is absorbed into a player's subconscious and he follows it automatically. However, this can only be achieved by special training, a matter to which too few players, alas, give sufficient attention...

3 Visual Imagination and Chess Analysis

Benjamin Blumenfeld

Note: This article was first published in 1936

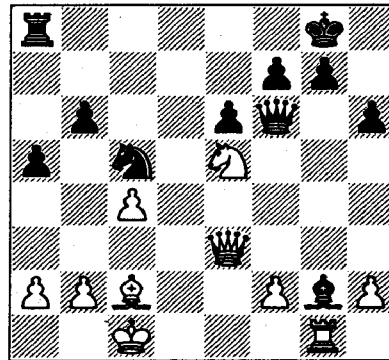
The prime concern of chess theoreticians is the study of openings. In practical chess, opening knowledge undoubtedly plays a major role – but not a decisive one. Even in the recent Alekhine-Euwe match (1935), for all Euwe's massive opening preparation and Alekhine's dubious experiments, we can point to very few games in which defeat resulted solely from a bad opening. At any rate, in the vast majority of games the result was – or could have been – affected in the later stages by errors or superficiality on the part of one (or often both) of the players.

From this it follows that correcting the faults in our processes of thought is no less significant than perfecting our opening knowledge.

I hope the chess press and organizations will consider the possibility of investigative work on this subject. The ideas of practical players on how to eliminate errors and

improve their thought-processes may also be significant, even if only as material for future research.

My first example illustrates the theme of visual imagination.



B

Blumenfeld – Zhivtsov
Moscow Championship
Semi-final

In this position Black put his bishop *en prise* with 1...Bh3?.

This blunder astonished me all the more since my young opponent

had made a good impression both in this game and in the tournament as a whole. He was not short of time on the clock, and had taken quite a long time over his faulty move. As I discovered from talking to him after the game, he rejected 1...Bh3 (1...Bb7 2 Qg4) 2 Bxh3 Bxe5 3 Bxh6 Bc1+ 4 Qxe1 gxf6, when the advantage is rather with White, who has bishop for knight and a queenside pawn majority. When making the move 1...Bh3 he imagined that White was unable to win a piece in view of 2 Bxe4 Bxe5 3 Bh7+ Qxh7 4 Bxe5 Qd3+, regaining the queen with a knight fork. He overlooked that after 2 Bxe4 the a8-rook is attacked.

At first sight it seems incomprehensible that the player with Black should see comparatively far ahead in the two variations quoted, and at the same time miss the perfectly obvious attack made by his opponent's very next move.

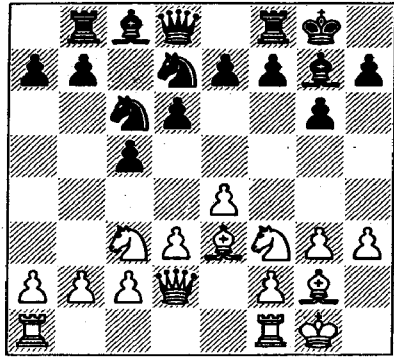
As far as I can judge from my own experience in analogous cases, the reason for this mistake was as follows. When Black was calculating the line 1...Bh3 2 Bxe4, etc., he didn't mentally place the bishop on e4 but kept it so to speak in mid-air, pointing at h7, ready to give check with a discovered attack on the queen.

Conceptually, the movements of the bishop could be formulated like this. From c2 the bishop is directed against h7, where it then lands; all the while you are aware that on its way to h7 it has a stopping place on e4, but this halt at e4 is not actually visualized by your mind's eye. Similar errors are quite common in practical play.

An especially frequent occurrence is this: when pondering a variation, you forget to move a piece or take away a captured one in accordance with one of the moves; in your mind, the piece mistakenly remains on its original square.

It should be observed that in the majority of cases, such errors result not from weakness of the visual imagination, but either from nervous haste or else from an insufficient effort of concentration. When mentally playing a move, it is tiresome to have to register the change immediately in your mind's eye. Often you will take a short cut by making the move on the basis of an internal dialogue. This may take the form of mentally recording the notation of the move; or a spatial movement may be traced out in your mind, without however yielding a firmly fixed image of the resulting position.

Let us move on to another example of a similar theme.



B

Sergeev – Blumenfeld
Moscow Championship
Semi-final

This position was reached in my last-round game in the same event. In view of the tournament situation, a draw was enough for me. As we all know, playing to draw is not so easy: the urge to simplify and the fear of complications have a harmful effect.

In this position I played 1...♖d4. I had used up more than half an hour on it, since I was in a quandary. White was threatening to exchange my fianchettoed bishop with ♗h6. I was not interested in wasting time preventing this with 1...♞e8, especially since the rook might come in useful on the f-file to support ...f5. On the whole I came to the conclusion that White had a clear plan for attacking

Black's castled position by advancing his f-pawn and, if appropriate, his g-pawn. Not knowing what to do about it, I played 1...♖d4 to postpone the decision.

In view of the threat to win a pawn with ...♖xf3+ followed by ...♗e5, etc., I was convinced when I played my move that White would reply 2 ♖h2 – and I thought to myself, “Too bad that after 1...♖d4 2 ♖h2 ♖xf3+ 3 ♗xf3 ♗e5 4 ♗g2 ♗xh3, he takes on h3 with his king (not his bishop), and I can't make anything of his exposed king position.”

In the event White answered 1...♖d4 with 2 ♖d1?, and now it was a full five minutes before I realized I could win a pawn with 2...♖xf3+, etc. These five minutes of thinking-time were spent in dithering over what plan to adopt, and as I couldn't make up my mind, I took a breather from these oppressive thoughts and came back to my previous theme: “Too bad, after 2...♖xf3+ 3 ♗xf3 ♗e5 4 ♗g2 ♗xh3 he takes with his king”, etc. Then suddenly I saw that he *couldn't*, as his king was on g1, not h2.

In my mind, then, during those five minutes, the white king was not on g1 – where I could have seen it was, by simply looking – but on h2, the square where I had

mentally placed it in anticipation of my opponent's move. Suppose that after 2 ♖d1 I had found it easy to take a decision, and hadn't come back to my old idea – “Too bad”, etc. Then it is quite possible that I wouldn't have played 2...♖xf3+ winning a pawn.

The present example is all the more interesting since the threat to win a pawn was in my mind when I played 1...♖d4, and yet, after mentally moving the king in the course of my analysis, I forgot to put it back; the image created by my mind's eye prevented me from objectively registering the king's location.

However, the explanation I have just given is not the only one. The following is also possible. When I was thinking about 1...♖d4, I decided that since White was going to reply 2 ♖h2, I could gain nothing from 2...♖xf3+; this ready-made conclusion stuck in my mind even though the premise (2 ♖h2) was lacking.

Of course it is hard to decide which explanation is correct in this particular instance. At any rate, as far as I can judge from my own experience, there are moments when an image created by the mind's eye succeeds in supplanting reality.

But if such cases are infrequent, it is surely a common occurrence

that the movements in the mind's eye when pondering one variation hinder the correct visualization of a position arising in a different line. **It is clear that the more variations and the greater their length, the greater is the possibility of error.**

A further point should also be borne in mind.

Each time you mentally execute a move in a long variation, the resulting position differs more and more from the one currently on the board; hence the image in your mind becomes paler and paler. Here and there, you may find a chess player with a particularly strong visual imagination, who is confident of correctly ‘seeing’ a position reached at the end of a long variation; yet there can be no assurance that his evaluation of that position will not be adversely affected by the paleness of the image. This is something that happens to every chess player – after working out a variation correctly, you cannot decide whether it is in your favour or not. The chief explanation for this, as far as I can judge from myself, is the inadequate clarity of the picture received by the mind. **A chess player's thought is bound up with visual imaginings. Therefore, the brighter and more distinct the visual picture,**

the more easily and precisely his thinking will operate, and the richer it will be.

There is another danger entailed by long variations: the psychological strain of having to register the changes, move by move, in your mind's eye is so great that fatigue from this exertion can affect your subsequent play.

Every practical player should clearly take stock of the role played by visual representation, and of the hazards inseparable from tactical analysis; from this he should draw the appropriate conclusions, bearing in mind, of course, the quality of his own visual imagination.

For our own part, our conclusions are as follows:

After your opponent's move you must begin your deliberations not from any ready-made decisions previously arrived at, but so to speak afresh; before anything else, let your eyes take the current position in. However strongly developed your visual imagination may be, it is perfectly obvious that an image in the mind is less distinct than one received by direct perception. Thus, **when your opponent moves, it never pays (except when in severe time-trouble, of course) to reply instantly, without any further thought –**

even if his move was the one you expected, and you have your reply ready. Your reply was, after all, prepared when the current position existed only in the imagination. It is quite possible that once your eyes can see the new position directly, with all its peculiarities – including your opponent's last move – new thoughts will arise owing to the greater clarity of the picture.

You must exercise strict self-discipline when analysing variations. In particular, **don't let your thoughts skip from one line to another and return to the same line several times over.** Instead, start by deciding the order (geared to the specific context) in which the variations should be examined. **Then proceed systematically from one variation to the next.** In each line, at every turn, carry out and register the movement of the piece in your mind's eye. At the end of the variation, carry out a résumé. Only then proceed to the next variation.

In establishing the order of analysis, your basic purpose must, as far as possible, be to restrict the quantity and length of the variations. When considering the opponent's possible replies to a move you are contemplating, the one to examine first is the one which at

first sight looks most dangerous. It is only if you find a counter to this reply that you should consider other, less obvious moves for your opponent. Similarly, **if you judge that a clear, decisive advantage emerges from a variation a few moves deep, there is no point in mentally extending that variation by thinking about the detailed exploitation of the advantage.**

If the move you are playing is completely forced, so that a branching of variations occurs only after this move and your opponent's reply, there is no point in immersing yourself in analysis as yet. After your forced move and the opponent's next one, the picture will be clearer and the analysis easier. The same reasoning applies if you are contemplating (for instance) a variation eight moves deep, and realize that after the first few moves you can force a repetition, i.e. a return to the current position. In that case it is as well to play the first few moves without a long think, and afterwards calculate the variation to the end. If it turns out to be unfavourable, you can return to the point of departure by repeating moves.

In situations that are not sharp, where there cannot be any forced variations, your calculations should be confined to a

few short lines which serve to bring out the characteristics of the position.

If there is a choice between two continuations which carry roughly the same result (equality, edge, decisive advantage), preference should be given to the line that involves less tactical analysis and consequently less danger of error. This principle should be rigorously applied and should override any 'romanticism'. For instance, if the choice is between reducing to a clearly won pawn ending with an extra pawn and playing a mating combination with sub-variations several moves deep, it is more sensible to choose the former. There are familiar cases from tournament practice where a player has announced mate in a few moves and then gone on to lose, since the mate turned out to be illusory.

Our arguments, especially this last one, will undoubtedly meet with opposition from the partisans of 'beauty' in chess. In our view, the analysis of variations is merely an indispensable technical procedure, and if this procedure can be simplified or made easier, so much the better. Beauty in chess is a matter of the inner logic and richness of ideas, which in most cases can be adequately disclosed by a deep study of the position; calculation is

necessary only to verify that the ideas are correct. Chess is a game of purpose – the point is to achieve the desired result with the greatest certainty. That is why we think our argument is right.

Visual imagination is so important for chess thought that physical conditions which assist vision are bound to make a difference. In particular, this means adequate lighting during play, a board and pieces of the correct relative sizes, and a colour scheme that is pleasing to the eye. From personal experience

I know what happens at a simultaneous display if the lighting is bad, the pieces are painted in irritating colours, or the boards are the wrong size for the pieces: the result, even against a weak contingent, can be worse than in a display against stronger opponents in surroundings more congenial to the eyesight. I suggest that chess organizations ought to consult specialist physiologists and psychologists, and draw up a standard pattern of equipment following their guidelines.

4 How Chess Intuition Develops

Mark Dvoretsky

Chess players of universal style, who handle any type of position with equal competence, are extremely rare. Bobby Fischer was one such. So, in his best years, was Boris Spassky. As a rule, everyone's play, even that of the top grandmasters, has weak points of one kind or another. It is very important to eradicate them in good time, to bring the backward areas of your game 'up to scratch' – without of course renouncing your creative individuality.

Traditionally, chess players are classed as combinative or positional. At one time it was relatively simple to categorize them on these lines, but today things are different – there are hardly any purely positional or purely combinative players left. In any case, this classification refers only to the outward manner of play, not to the underlying qualities of thought. It gives you too little to go on when it comes to choosing the form and content of a training course suited to a particular player.

To me it seems more helpful to categorize players according to their predominant style of thinking, their characteristic approach to taking decisions – the intuitive or the logical.

Grandmasters of an intuitive bent – Capablanca, Tal, Petrosian, Karpov are examples – have a delicate feel for the slightest nuances of a position, while possessing a keen eye for combination. They are relatively weaker when it comes to planning and strategy; they are none too fond of working out variations, and commit errors in their calculations.

At the opposite pole there are players like Rubinstein, Botvinnik and Kasparov. They conceive profound plans in the opening and ensuing phases; they think in a disciplined manner and calculate variations precisely. Yet now and again they miss unexpected tactical ideas; they sometimes prove too single-minded and insufficiently alert to the critical moments of the struggle.

Of course, all this is no more than a rough-and-ready sketch. To 'diagnose' a player I am coaching – whether a young candidate master or a grandmaster – I usually apply a much wider set of parameters. Nonetheless, the classification I have suggested does seem to me to have a good deal of practical use.

It is a great boon for a chess player to be naturally blessed with a highly developed intuition. Yet there is also a serious psychological danger lurking here, as Alexander Alekhine observed: "Speed of comprehension; the ability to see, almost instantaneously, a whole range of the tactical possibilities inherent in any complex position; economy of thought, and resulting self-confidence – the obvious advantages which these factors bring are almost inevitably associated with temptations. A player can easily adopt a false attitude: on acquainting himself with a position, he may assume that the good moves he sees instantly, or almost instantly, must be the very best. In consequence, his play loses in depth as much as it gains in facility. Unfortunately (for the art of chess), this gradual renunciation of the search for the absolute, this tendency to be satisfied with moves that are merely good, characterizes

the present phase of Capablanca's career." (From Alekhine's famous article *The 1927 New York Tournament as a Prelude to the World Title Match in Buenos Aires*.)

Chess players of the intuitive cast of mind do well to train by solving strategic problems (such as the choice of plan in the transition stage from opening to middle-game). They can usefully apply themselves to exercises in the calculation of complex variations, demanding concentrated, painstaking attention. I once suggested to Alexander Chernin that he should try working along these lines. He soon made substantial progress, quickly graduating from a run-of-the-mill master to a strong grandmaster and participant in the World Championship Candidates Tournament.

For a player whose intuition needs to be developed, things are more complicated. Some chess players, and even their coaches, have no idea how this problem can even be approached. In this chapter I shall offer some thoughts on it, based on my own coaching experience.

Chess intuition is the ability to perform easily and swiftly – sometimes instantaneously – the mental act of grasping the character of a position, identifying the main ideas

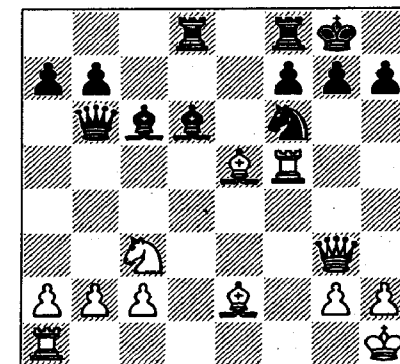
in it, assessing how promising some particular continuation is. Intuitive insight helps us to dispense with lengthy and complicated calculations; it facilitates our search for the right move; it suggests where a solution might be unearthed.

Serious study of chess, of the kinds of rationale governing the struggle – intensive analysis of specific concrete situations – this significantly develops and enriches our intuition. I am not going to prove this assertion; it is illustrated in Part One of my book *Secrets of Chess Training* – see the chapter 'On the Usefulness of 'Abstract' Knowledge'. I also advise you to consult Eduard Gufeld's articles 'Intuition and Inspiration' and 'How to Develop Intuition', which are included in his book of selected games, *My Life in Chess*.

Throughout the whole course of a game we rely on our intuition (with a greater or lesser degree of frequency and success). It reveals itself in the most diverse forms. Consider some of the concepts which we constantly employ: 'positional *flair*', 'the *spirit* of the position', 'an *eye* for combination', 'a *sense* of danger', 'a *feeling* for the initiative (the dynamics of the game)' – from the very forms of

expression it is apparent that these are all various manifestations of intuitive perception as applied to chess. In principle it would be useful to discuss each of them separately, but that would be the subject of a special investigation.

In chess literature, oddly enough, intuition tends to be equated simply with the capacity to embark on material sacrifices which don't lend themselves to exact calculation. Essentially, two concepts are confused: the risk which goes with the impossibility of calculating variations to the end, and intuition.



W

Suetin – Bagirov
USSR Championship,
Leningrad 1963

Vladimir Bagirov has just played 17...♙e7-d6!. 'Normal' continuations lead to exchanges, and Black

obtains an excellent position. He has nothing to fear from either 18 ♖xd6 ♜xd6 (19 ♜xd6?? ♖xg2+) or 18 ♜xf6 ♖xe5 19 ♜xc6 ♜xb2!. Alexei Suetin wrote: "What was I to do? I didn't want to go in for simplifications. Suddenly I was attracted, indeed thrilled, by the prospect of a queen sacrifice. I feverishly calculated variations. The hands of the clock kept turning relentlessly, while the calculations grew more and more complicated. All I could do was either settle for a draw or take the risk, relying on my intuition."

It is clear from his comment that Suetin spent a large amount of time trying to work out the sacrifice precisely, but failed. Of course, the bold decision that he took contained an element of intuitive judgement, but no more than an element. At heart, he was proceeding not intuitively but analytically – and he was certainly right to do so, given the large material plus which Black receives (a queen for just one piece). Any defensive resource that White had not accounted for, permitting Black to parry the immediate threats, could instantly have ended the game in Black's favour.

Nevertheless, it is likely that some players would approach the problem differently, in a genuinely intuitive manner. For instance, it is

certain that after sizing up some variations Mikhail Tal would quite quickly have decided that the sacrifice was promising (that is the point – not provably correct, but promising) and that he ought to go in for it. Or, instead, he would have assessed its consequences as favourable to Black, and played differently.

18 ♜xg7+!? ♖xg7

19 ♖xf6+

Suetin wrote: "Now it was my opponent's turn to cogitate. As later became apparent, this may well have been the decisive moment of the struggle. Where should the king go – to h6 or g6? Bagirov thought for a whole hour, and he too made his move chiefly on the basis of intuition..."

A strange conclusion, isn't it? He "thought for a whole hour", and played by "intuition"! In actual fact Black attempted to calculate everything precisely, but was unable to do so, and made a mistake. What has this to do with intuition? We can see that Suetin is talking about it without having a clear notion of what it is.

As it happens, the sacrifice was objectively unsound, as Andrei Lilienthal demonstrated. The refutation is 19...♖g6!:

a) On 20 ♖d3 Black has the powerful reply 20...♖e7!, attacking

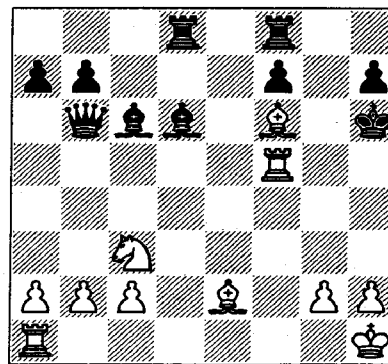
the d3-bishop with his rook. For example, 21 ♖xe7 ♜xd3 22 ♜g5+ ♖h6 23 cxd3 ♜e8! 24 ♖f6 ♜e6.

b) The main line is 20 ♜af1 ♜e3 21 ♖d3 ♖h6!, and now:

b1) If White follows Tal's recommendation with 22 ♖d1 ♜d2 23 ♜5f2 (23 ♖f2 ♜g8), Black has 23...♜xf2! 24 ♜xf2 ♜de8 25 ♖c3 f5! with advantage.

b2) 22 ♖xd8 ♜xd8 23 ♜xf7 (after 23 ♜f6+ ♖g7 24 ♜xf7+ ♖g8 25 ♖xh7+ ♖h8 White's attack is repulsed) 23...♜d7 24 ♖d5!? (or 24 ♜1f6+ ♖g5 25 ♜f5+ ♖h4!) 24...♖xd5! and then 25 ♜xd7 ♖xg2+! 26 ♖xg2 ♜g5+ 27 ♖f3 ♜f4+ 28 ♖e2 ♜g4+, or 25 ♜1f6+ ♖g5 26 ♜f5+ ♖h4 27 ♜xd7 ♜c1+ 28 ♖f1 (28 ♜f1 ♖xg2+ 29 ♖xg2 ♜g5+) 28...♖xg2+! 29 ♖xg2 ♜xc2+ and Black wins.

19 ... ♖h6? (D)



W

20 ♜af1!

White intends 21 ♜h5+ ♖g6 22 ♜h4, with the threats 23 ♖d3+ and 23 ♖h5+.

20 ... ♜e3

20...♖e7! was stronger; it practically forces the draw with 21 ♜h5+ ♖g6 22 ♜g5+, because 21 ♖xe7 f6! 22 ♖xf6 ♜xf6 23 ♜xf6+ ♖g7 24 ♜f7+ ♖h8 25 ♖d3 ♜d7 (or 25...♜xb2) is hardly dangerous for Black.

21 ♜h5+ ♖g6

22 ♜h4! ♖f4

The only defence.

23 ♜hxf4

Not 23 ♜fxf4 ♜c1+ 24 ♖f1, which fails against 24...h5! 25 ♖e2 ♜xc2.

23 ... h5

23...♜h3 24 ♖e4!.

24 ♖xd8 ♜xd8

25 ♖d3+ ♜xd3!

In time-trouble Black hastens to simplify the position. A weaker line is 25...♖g7 26 ♜xf7+ ♖g8 27 ♖c4 ♖h8 28 ♜7f5 ♖e8 29 ♖d5, with dangerous threats.

26 cxd3 ♜xd3

27 ♜f6+ ♖g5

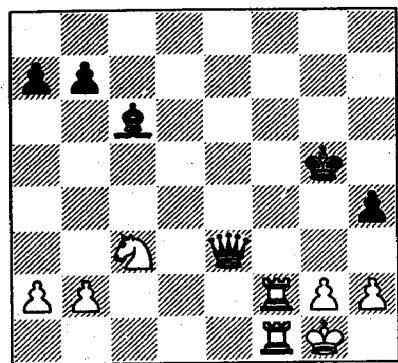
28 ♜xf7 h4

29 ♖g1 ♜e3+

30 ♜7f2 (D)

30 ... ♖h5?

White now obtains a decisive advantage. Black had to open up his opponent's king position: 30...h3!



B

31 gxh3 ♖f3!, with a probable draw.

31 ♖e2! ♖h6 32 ♖f4 a5 33 ♖d1 a4 34 h3 ♖h7 35 ♖d5 ♖c5 36 ♖f6+ ♖g7 37 a3 ♖g6 38 ♖g4 ♖h7 39 ♖e1 ♖d6 40 ♖e3 ♖g6 41 ♖f5 ♖d8 42 ♖e6+ (42 ♖e7+ ♖g7 43 ♖e6 is even stronger) 42...♖f7 43 ♖d4+ ♖g7 44 ♖e4 ♖d7 45 ♖f3 ♖f5 46 ♖d4 ♖e8 47 ♖xh4, and White gradually exploited his material plus.

Let us return to the position where White was faced with his problem. Pondering this kind of obscure position is one way to develop your intuition. You would think about the position for a while and try to 'guess' whether the sacrifice was sound, and whether it was worth going in for it. Obviously you could not entirely do without calculating some variations. (Incidentally, this same position is

perfectly suitable for training in analysis; it all depends which mental approach you are adopting.) When exercising your intuition, you should not be trying to calculate everything 'to the end'. Instead, looking at the indispensable minimum of variations, you should try to reach a definite conclusion as quickly as possible. Then compare your verdict with the 'right answer', and you will see whether you were searching along the correct lines, or whether from the outset you were missing some relevant ideas – either points of judgement or of concrete tactics.

In the same way, you could try to select the right square for the black king on move 19.

Some exercises of a similar kind (classified by theme) are to be found in the book, *Secrets of Chess Training* which I mentioned earlier.

Why did White's attack succeed in the example we have examined? The key factors were not purely technical (objectively the queen sacrifice was incorrect), but psychological – the kind you *must* take into account when intuitively weighing up the prospects offered by this or that solution to your problem. The effect of surprise

was important (Bagirov had studied the position after 17...♖d6 in his home analysis, but hadn't noticed the queen sacrifice), but the peculiarities of Bagirov's style were the main thing. He is a strong positional player but usually performs much more weakly in obscure tactical situations.

I once managed to profit from this myself:

Dvoretsky – Bagirov
USSR Championship
(First League), Tbilisi 1973
Alekhine Defence

1	e4	♖f6
2	e5	♖d5
3	d4	d6
4	c4	♖b6
5	exd6	cx d6
6	♖c3	g6
7	h3	♖g7
8	♖f3	0-0
9	♖e2	♖c6
10	0-0	♖f5
11	♖e3	d5
12	c5	♖c4
13	♖xc4	dx c4
14	♖a4	♖d3

This is a well-known variation of the Alekhine Defence, of which Bagirov is a connoisseur. Subsequent games have convinced me that Black equalizes with 14...c5!.

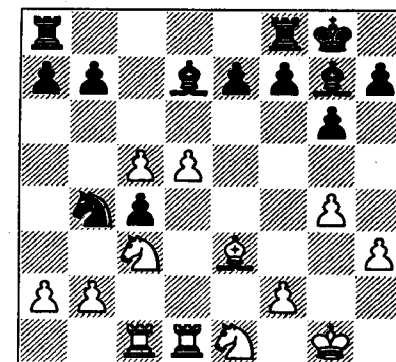
15 ♖f1 ♖a5!

Now, however, 15...e5? is met by 16 d5 ♖d4?! 17 ♖e1!. Another bad line is 15...f5? 16 d5, when 16...♖e5 is met by 17 ♖g5! (or 17 ♖e1!) 17...f4 18 ♖d4! (but not 18 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 19 ♖e6 ♖b8 20 ♖xf4 ♖f3+ 21 gx f3 ♖xf4), while 16...f4 is no help due to 17 ♖xd3!! cxd3 18 dxc6 fxe3 19 cxb7 ex f2+ 20 ♖f1 (now we see why White gave up the exchange) 20...♖b8 21 ♖c4+ ♖h8 22 c6.

16	♖xa5	♖xa5
17	♖e1	♖f5
18	♖ac1	

Not as strong as 18 d5!, which I later played against W. Martz at Wijk aan Zee 1975.

18	...	♖c6!
19	g4	♖d7
20	d5	♖b4 (D)



W

If now 21 a3, then after 21...♖a6 and 22...♖ac8, the c5-pawn is very

weak. Overall, Black has an excellent position. With this – and my opponent's style – in mind, I decided to complicate and provoke Bagirov into a piece sacrifice.

21 b3!? ♖xa2

21...cxb3 22 axb3 e6! was simpler, with an approximately equal position; however, the temptation proved too strong.

22 ♖xa2 cxb3

23 ♖c3 ♜fc8?!

This is the kind of thing I was banking on – Bagirov already commits a serious inaccuracy. He hopes to prevent 24 ♙d4, but his move fails to do so.

23...a5 was stronger; then on 24 ♙d4, Black has either 24...a4 25 ♙xg7 ♜xg7 26 ♜b1 ♜fc8 27 ♖d3 ♜a5! (intending ...♜xc5 or ...♙b5), or 24...e5 25 dxe6 ♙xe6 26 ♙xg7 ♜xg7 27 ♜d4 ♜fd8 28 ♖f3 h5!? 29 gxf5 ♙f5 30 ♖a4 gxf5, with chances for both sides.

24 ♙d4! ♙xd4

25 ♜xd4 ♜xc5

26 ♜b4

I considered 26 ♖d3 less accurate on account of 26...b2! 27 ♖xb2 ♜ac8.

26 ... ♜ac8

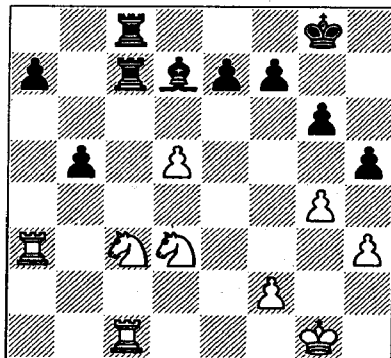
Or 26...b5 27 ♜xb3 a5? 28 ♖d3 and, when the rook moves, 29 ♖xb5.

27 ♜xb3 b5

28 ♖d3 ♜5c7

29 ♜a3 h5 (D)

It was worth considering 29...a5 30 ♖a2 ♜xc1+ 31 ♖dxc1 a4. The pawns would be blocked, but at least they would be that bit further advanced.



W

30 gxf5

30 f3!? is more solid.

30 ... gxf5

31 h4 ♙f5?!

It is incomprehensible why Black refrains from 31...a5!? 32 ♖a2 ♜xc1+ 33 ♖dxc1 a4 (threatening 34...♜c4) 34 ♖d3 ♙f5 (34...♜c4? 35 ♖e5). With 35 ♖e5! White would preserve some winning chances, but nothing more. We can see that in a complex position Bagirov is unsure of himself. He usually avoids such situations and has inadequate experience of them. Hence his intuition fails him here.

32 ♖e2 ♜xc1+?

After this, Black's position is hopeless. The indicated line was 32...♙xd3 33 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 34 ♜xd3 a5. In the endgame, passed pawns must be pushed!

33 ♖dxc1 ♜c7

34 ♖b3 ♙e4

35 ♖bd4 ♙xd5

36 ♖xb5 ♜c4

37 ♖bd4! ♜c7

37...e5 38 ♜a5!.

38 ♜h2 e5?!

39 ♜a5! exd4

40 ♜xd5 ♜c2

41 ♖xd4 ♜xf2+

42 ♜g3 ♜d2

43 ♜g5+ ♜f8

44 ♖f5 a5

45 ♜xh5 ♜g8

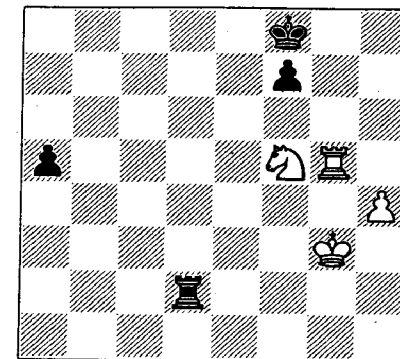
46 ♜g5+

The sealed move. It was a good moment to adjourn. The position is definitely won for White, but at this stage he has to figure out the right plan for realizing his advantage, and this is best done 'at home'.

46 ... ♜f8 (D)

47 ♜h5

At first it seemed to me that 47 h5, was the simplest way to win, e.g.: 47...♜d1 48 ♜g2 ♜d2+ 49 ♜h3 ♜d1 50 ♖g3 (now the a-pawn is attacked) 50...a4 51 h6 ♜d6 52 h7. However, I then discovered that after 47...♜d1 48 ♜g2 Black



W

has 48...f6! 49 ♜g6 (49 h6 ♜d7!) 49...♜d7! (but not 49...♜f7? 50 ♜g7+ ♜e6 51 h6!). The rook exchange after 50 ♜xf6+ ♜f7 leads to a draw, but otherwise Black obtains counterchances with 50...♜a7. Incidentally, it is essential for Black to insert 47...♜d1!, because the immediate 47...f6 48 ♜g6 ♜d7 allows White an easy win with 49 ♜xf6+ ♜f7 50 ♜xf7+ ♜xf7 51 ♖d4 (or 51 ♖d6+) 51...a4 52 ♖b5 ♜f6 53 ♜g4.

47 ... ♜g8

48 ♜h6 a4

49 ♜a6 ♜a2

50 ♜g4 a3

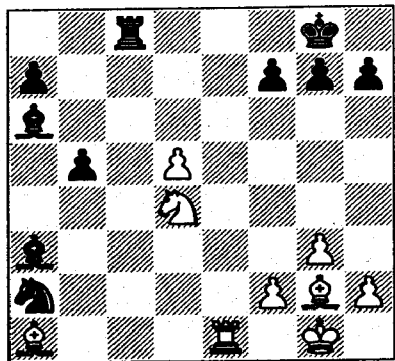
51 ♜h5 f6

51...♜a1 52 ♜h6 leads to the same thing. The most stubborn defence was 51...♜h7 52 ♜a7 ♜f2!, but even then White would win by 53 ♜xf7+ ♜h8 54 ♜g6 ♜g2+ 55 ♜h6 ♜g8 56 ♜a7 a2 57 h5 ♜b2 58 ♖h4 ♜f8 59 ♖g6+ ♜e8 60 ♖e5!

(preparing 61 ♖g5) 60...♞g2 61 ♘d3 and 62 ♘b4.

52	♞a7!	♞a1
53	♖g6	♞g1+
54	♖xf6	♞a1
55	♘h6+	♖h8
56	♘f7+	1-0

The type of inscrutable position which can serve to test and refine your intuition is often, but not always, bound up with sacrifices of material.



W

Kasparov – Karpov
World Championship match (6),
Moscow 1984/5

Black is a pawn up, but the activity of White's pieces more than compensates for the small material deficit. Clearly White must now move his knight forward. But where to – f5 or c6?

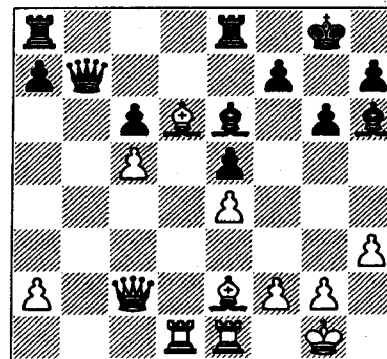
On c6 the knight attacks the a7-pawn. It restricts the mobility of Black's rook, and of his minor pieces too. On the other hand, from f5 the knight would control d6 and prepare the advance of the passed d-pawn. What is more important? To work out the variations accurately over the board is quite impossible – after going through a few tentative lines, you are bound to fall back on intuition.

In his book *The Test of Time* Kasparov repeatedly points out how, in complex situations, his intuitive appraisal of a position would turn out to be right. He is evidently proud of his intuition and considers it his strong point. Clearly, though, any top-rank chess player can boast of plenty of cases where he solved complex problems correctly. To form an objective judgement of how well developed a chess player's intuition is, it is more important to trace how often it lets him down. The young Mikhail Tal, for example, would almost always hit on the strongest course in sharp positions, finding the most dangerous attacking resources. Nevertheless a careful study of Kasparov's games has convinced me that *his* flair is by no means impeccable. Even in his best games he would often 'lose the thread' at some point and give his opponents

extra chances (which, to be sure, they didn't always utilize).

So it was in this example. Kasparov 'guessed wrongly' and missed the win. Afterwards he failed to sense when the moment had come to force a draw, and ended up losing. You will find the game in the Supplement to this chapter.

Correct intuitive appraisal of a situation helps a player to apportion his thinking time rationally; it tells him when he needs to concentrate and examine the variations thoroughly, and when, on the contrary, for one reason or another, there is no point in going in for detailed calculations.



B

Tal – Dvoretsky
USSR Championship,
Leningrad 1974

21 ... ♞f8!?

When I made this move I was very much hoping that the ex-World Champion would be tempted to start an attack on my king with 22 ♞xe5 ♞xa2 23 ♞a1! (threatening not only to take the bishop but also the deadly 24 ♞c3) 23...♞b3 (the only defence) 24 ♞d2. The variations would seem to turn out in his favour, for instance 24...♞xc5 25 ♞g5 (with threats of 26 ♞xc5 and 26 ♞f6), or 24...♞xe4 25 ♞f3 ♞xe1+ 26 ♞xe1 (threatening 27 ♞d4) 26...♞g7 27 ♞xg7 ♖xg7 28 ♞a1, and Black loses a piece. Such an attack would be wholly in Tal's style.

After a little vacillation, however, the grandmaster chose a quiet continuation in preference to sharpening the struggle.

22	♞b1!	♞d7
23	♞ed1	♞xd6
24	cx d6!	

White went on to realize his positional advantage by technical means.

The grandmaster's feel for the position had not deceived him. On 22 ♞xe5? I had prepared the unexpected stroke 22...♞b3!., equalizing. Even though Tal didn't see this, he intuitively made the right choice.

His decision was based on a true assessment of the situation on the

board. Tal writes that he didn't want to "give the black pieces free rein". Why indeed should he go in for complications, at the risk of making mistakes in calculation, when his opponent's pieces are already condemned to passivity and White's obvious advantage can be preserved by simple methods?

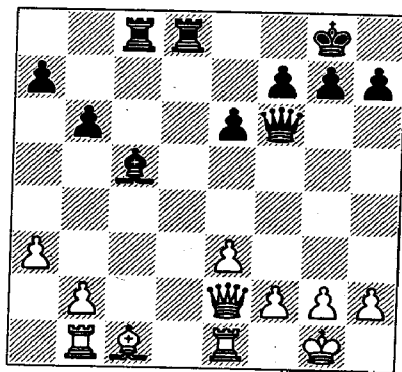
I dare say it is now time to surface from the stormy ocean of combinative complexities and talk about the placid positional tasks and relatively simple tactical problems that we encounter almost at every step.

In some books you can read that the process of evaluating a position consists in isolating and weighing up all the positional factors that play a part in it. Nonsense! In actual fact, most of this task is performed subconsciously. **The art of evaluation lies in understanding the essence of a position – identifying the crucial problem (either positional or tactical) that needs solving – sensing the right direction for our investigations and detecting the desirability or otherwise of a particular operation.** It is clear that a well-developed intuition will enhance the speed and accuracy of our perceptions.

You may have heard the old chestnut about some grandmasters

who were deep in analysis of a difficult position and asked Vasily Smyslov for his advice. After a short think the latter said, "You should place the rook on the fifth rank." This recommendation appeared all too abstract, yet after a while he repeated it: "Come on, rook to the fifth!" They started analysing along these lines and soon understood that Smyslov was absolutely right.

You can find examples of this kind of judgement by studying game annotations, especially those written by the intuitive type of player.



B

Nimzowitsch – Capablanca
New York 1927

Capablanca wrote: "White has finally prepared the freeing manoeuvre b2-b4 followed by ♖b2.

Black has occupied both open files with his rooks, and is ahead of his opponent in development. He now has to realize his advantage one way or another, before White finishes developing his position."

20 ... ♔e5!

"A subtle move with the purpose of gaining time to bring the queen into the fray. Black wants to occupy the seventh rank with one of his rooks, and the queen's help is essential for this. The text-move prevents the immediate 21 b4, as there would follow 21...♙d6 22 g3 ♗e4, and Black gains control of the seventh."

As you see, Capablanca has formulated his chief goal: seizure of the seventh rank. (It is also clear what White wants: to complete his development and start exchanging rooks.) Without concrete analysis it is hard to foresee who will be more successful in carrying out his plans. But what the players must aim for is at any rate clear.

21 g3 ♗d5!
22 b4 ♙f8
23 ♙b2 ♗a2!
24 ♙a1

Alekhine suggested 24 ♙bd1!? ♙xd1 (if 24...a5 at once, then 25 ♙xd8 ♙xd8 26 ♙d4!) 25 ♙xd1. After 25...a5 26 bxa5 bxa5 (26...♙xa3 27 ♗a6!) White cannot, unfortunately, play 27 ♗a6? ♙c2 28 ♙d8

(counting on 28...♙xb2? 29 ♙xf8+ with perpetual check, or 28...♗xb2? 29 ♗d6) because of 28...♗b1+! 29 ♙g2 ♗xb2. The right continuation is 27 ♙d2, and if 27...♙xa3, then 28 ♗a6!: 28...♙f8 29 ♗xa5 ♗b1+ 30 ♙g2 ♙xb2 (30...♗e4+? 31 f3) 31 ♗b4 or 28...♙b8 29 ♗xa5! and the b2-bishop is invulnerable.

24 ... ♗b3

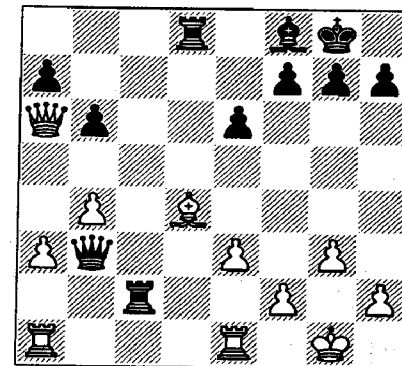
25 ♙d4?

Amazingly, Nimzowitsch doesn't understand that he must try to save himself by exchanging rooks. 25 ♙ac1! was essential.

25 ... ♙c2

26 ♗a6? (D)

White could defend more stubbornly with 26 ♗f1 or 26 ♗d1, preparing 27 ♙e2. After the move played, Black gives a text-book demonstration of the power of seventh-rank control.



B

26 ... e5!
 27 ♖xe5 ♔dd2
 28 ♗b7

If 28 ♖f1, then 28... ♗xe3! 29 ♖f4 ♖xf2! is decisive. On 28 ♗f1, Black has 28... ♗d5 29 ♖d4 ♗h5! (more precise than 29... ♗f3 30 ♖ac1) 30 h4 (otherwise 30... ♖xf2) 30... ♗f3.

28 ... ♖xf2
 29 g4 ♗e6
 30 ♖g3 ♖xh2!

Better than 30... ♗xg4 31 ♖f1.

31 ♗f3

Or 31 ♖xh2 ♗xg4+ 32 ♖h1 ♗h3, forcing mate.

31 ... ♖hg2+
 32 ♗xg2 ♖xg2+
 33 ♖xg2 ♗xg4
 34 ♖ad1 h5
 35 ♖d4 ♗g5
 36 ♖h2 a5
 37 ♖e2 axb4
 38 axb4 ♖e7
 39 ♖e4 ♖f6
 40 ♖f2 ♗d5
 41 ♖e8+ ♖h7

0-1

Various training exercises which force you to take decisions quickly, without thorough reflection, are very useful for developing your intuition.

At the first session of our chess school, Grandmaster Yusupov recommended a 'guessing' game. Take

a good game by a grandmaster, with his own detailed notes. After playing through the opening, start trying to guess his moves, one by one. Give yourself a very short time (for instance half an hour) for the whole game. Then compare your guesses with the grandmaster's actual moves and comments.

I once played an interesting kind of game with Sergei Dolmatov. It was aimed at developing his feel for the endgame. I would open a volume of *Informator* at the Endings section, pick a number at random, take the position with that number and set it up on the board. Dolmatov would play the side which had to achieve something – a draw from the worse position, or a win from the better position. To begin with he would think for five minutes, then we would play the position as a blitz game, with the trainer making use of the analysis in the book. In some cases we would introduce an extra rule whereby Dolmatov had the right to stop the clock once in the game, in a position he considered critical, and think for another five minutes. If you like, you can compete against a friend at this game. Use two separate volumes of *Informator*, and take it in turns to play the role of trainer.

However, the most effective form of training for the fast appraisal of positions was a game I shall now describe to you. Unfortunately you cannot play it without a coach or partner, and without a ready-made stock of special positions. (This need can be met, however, by a computer using the coaching program I have developed.)

Give yourself (let us say) 15 minutes on the clock. Within this time you have to find the right move in five different positions. The first position is set up on the chessboard and the clock is started. On reaching your decision, play the move on the board and stop the clock. Then the next position is set up – and so on. All five positions have to be solved before your flag falls. The tasks (whether positional or tactical) should not be too complicated or demand deep calculation, yet some should be simpler and some more difficult. You will need to economize your time to the full, to avoid getting into bad time-trouble over the final positions. But playing too quickly is dangerous too – you could easily make a silly mistake. You have 'won' if you solve all five positions correctly. Otherwise you have suffered a greater or lesser defeat.

There is also another version of this game – a version which, as it

happens, I have played with Dolmatov, Yusupov and other chess players I have coached. Your overall thinking time is slightly increased, to 20-25 minutes (only grandmasters are restricted to 15 minutes). You play the same way as before, except that if you get an answer wrong, your clock is put forward by one third of your original thinking time (i.e. by 5 minutes if you started with 15, by 6½ minutes if you started with 20, etc.). To 'succeed' in the series, you have to get through the five positions without overstepping the time-limit. As you will have grasped, under these rules you can 'win' even if you make one mistake. You can hardly win with two mistakes (you would be left with too little thinking time), and with three mistakes a win is logically impossible.

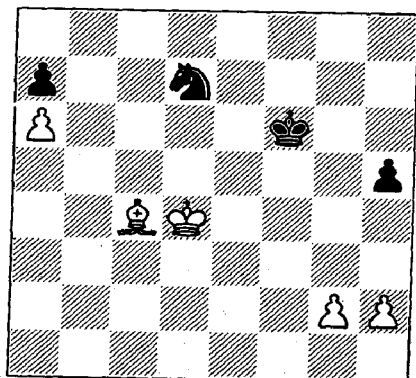
The game ends the moment your time runs out. On the other hand it is possible to win 'prematurely' – if the thinking time you have in hand for the last one or two positions exceeds the penalty that you would suffer for giving wrong (but instantaneous) answers. In this case you are not required to complete the solutions.

You may also, of course, carry on playing if your flag falls before you finish the series. It makes sense to do this if you have a rule (aimed

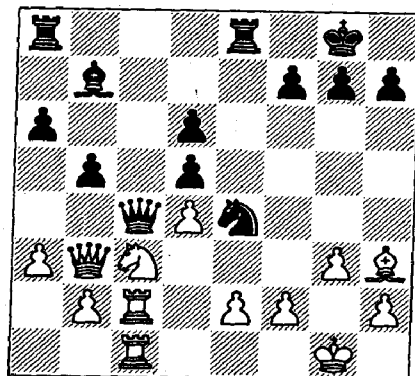
at increasing the seriousness and responsibility of your decision-taking) which lays down a 'penalty' for losing on time, dependent

on the number of excess minutes you require.

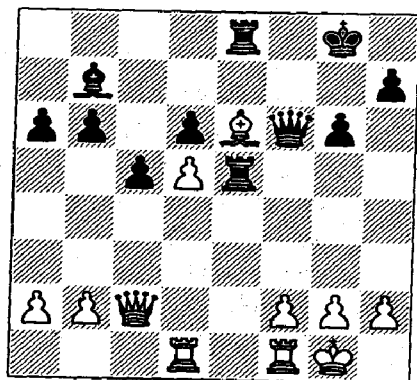
Now let us solve one such 'series'.



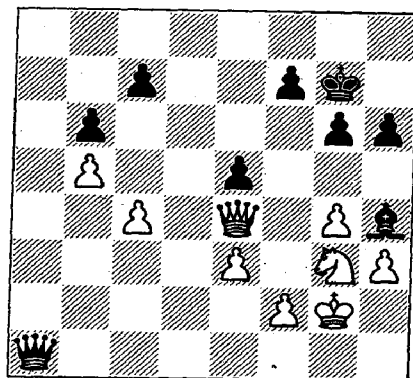
1. White to move



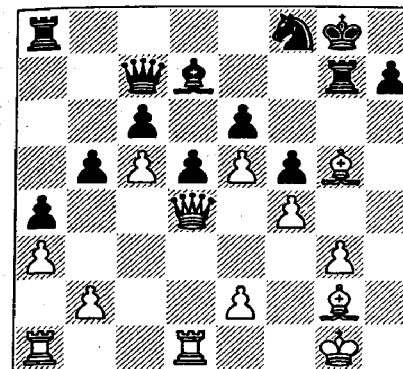
3. White to move



2. Black to move



4. White to move



5. White to move

Solutions are given on pages 273-5.

Practice has shown that this form of training is extremely useful if you take it seriously. It develops a number of important chess skills at once:

- **It improves your intuition,** your capacity to grasp both the tactical and the strategic details of a position quickly and reliably.
- **It cultivates your thought processes.** It nurtures the habit of instantly picking out the available 'candidate' moves as well as the opponent's main threats. Without this you cannot achieve success – with limited thinking time, mistakes will be inevitable.
- **It increases your resoluteness.** There is simply no time

for an exhaustive scrutiny of variations – you have to have confidence in yourself and take decisions boldly.

- **It helps you to combat time-trouble,** since you continually have to regulate your time expenditure.
- **It gets you into good competitive shape before a tournament.** It enhances your reflexes and speed of thought; there is no chance of emotional fatigue setting in, as the game is lively and exciting.

In conclusion I would like to draw together the basic ideas advanced in this chapter, to form something like a set of rules for independent work along the lines I have indicated.

Aide Memoire: **Recommended Precepts for Developing Your Intuition**

1. Pay careful attention to your impressions; try as often as possible to predict your conclusion in advance. To learn to guess right, you have to practise guessing constantly.

2. Don't just remember your first impressions – observe how

your feelings change as you look more deeply into the position. You may hit on the truth at any conceivable stage of your investigation into a position – but endeavour to do so as early as possible.

3. On discovering the 'right answer', don't forget to compare it with your hunch. Ascertain what ideas and themes prove to be the most important and influential in a particular position, and ask how far you took them into account in your deliberations.

4. A very wide spectrum of intuitive perceptions is possible. They may not always tell you the best move; they may relate to some specific points of evaluation, the desirability of some particular operation, a feeling for danger, etc.

5. Relative evaluations are generally more use than absolute ones. Verdicts such as 'the position is drawish' or 'the opponent's position is hopeless' are rather crude and by no means always conducive to a solution. Of much more importance are specific inferences which have to do with comparing various moves, plans, ideas and prospects, or assessing the dangers and difficulties that face you.

6. Consider not just the purely technical factors, but competitive ones – the situation in the tournament, your reserves of time and energy, your opponent's personality, the likelihood of errors on his part, etc.

7. 'Meta-intuitive' considerations are very important. For example: in a given situation, can intuition be trusted? Does the position on the board lend itself to precise calculation, and how much point would such calculations have – how much time would you be likely to need for thinking about your move?

8. Analyse your own performance; if necessary, modify the recommendations laid down here, and work out fresh rules.

9. Try to find the types of chess exercise that have the maximum effect on developing your intuition. Try to guess the right move quickly in relatively simple situations and also, conversely, in positions that defy exact calculation. Devise training exercises and games which require you to take intuitive decisions. It may be useful to play games at fast time-controls and study the games of intuitive players, etc.

10. Don't expect immediate results, but have firm confidence in eventual success. Purposeful efforts along the lines I have indicated are certain to develop your intuition. As a result your play will be more relaxed, more assured, quicker and sounder.

Supplement

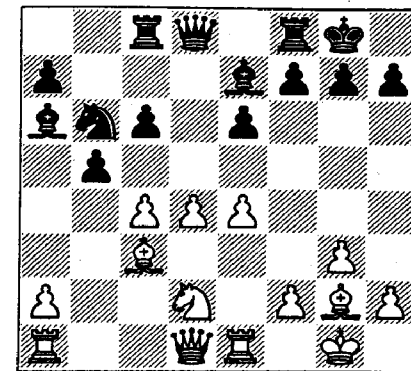
Kasparov – Karpov
World Championship match (6),
Moscow 1984/5
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 ♙a6 5 b3 ♙b4+ 6 ♙d2 ♙e7 7 ♙g2 0-0 8 0-0 d5 9 ♘e5 c6 10 ♙c3 ♘fd7 11 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 12 ♘d2 ♙c8 13 e4 b5

The consequences of 13...c5 were examined by Artur Yusupov at the second session of our chess school, in his comments on the encounter Yusupov-Sax, Rotterdam 1989. See the chapter 'Unexpected Moves in the Opening', in our book *Opening Preparation*.

Incidentally, our discussion of this Kasparov-Karpov game will be based on Yusupov's deep analysis published in *Sovietsky Sport* within a day of the end of the game.

14 ♙e1 dxc4
15 bxc4 ♘b6?! (D)
15...bxc4 is better.



W

16 cxb5?

The first (and by no means the last) occasion when Kasparov's positional flair lets him down. White could have gained the advantage by 16 c5!: 16...♘a4 17 ♖c2 (threatening 18 e5!) 17...e5 18 ♘f3, or 16...b4 17 ♙b2 ♘c4 18 ♘xc4 ♙xc4 19 ♖c2 ♙b5 20 a3.

16 ... cxb5
17 ♙c1 ♙a3
17...b4!?
18 ♙c2 ♘a4
19 ♙a1 ♙xc2
20 ♖xc2 ♖a5?

20...♖e7! was stronger, not only preparing 21...♙c8 but also preventing the d4-d5 break.

21 ♖d1!

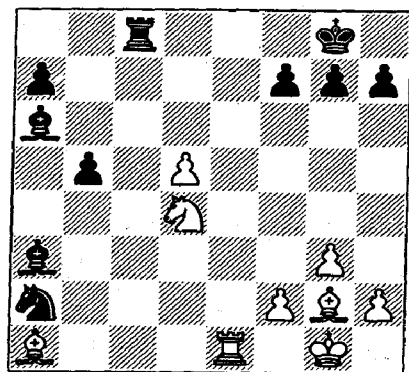
21 d5 is premature on account of 21...♙c8 22 ♖d3 (22 ♖d1 ♙c1) 22...♘b2!. White wants to play ♘b3 and only then d4-d5.

21 ... ♙c8?!

21...♖c3 is strongly met by 22 ♖b3! ♗b4 23 ♗c2 (23...♖xa2? 24 ♗e3). Instead Black should play 21...♗b2 22 ♖b3 ♗b4.

22 ♖b3 ♗b4
23 d5 exd5
24 exd5 ♖c3
25 ♗d4! ♗xd4
26 ♖xd4 ♖xa2 (D)

26...♗f8 and 27...b4 was more cautious.



W

In this position, Yusupov has shown that 27 ♖f5! gives White a decisive plus:

a) 27...g6? fails to 28 d6 gxf5 29 d7.

b) If 27...♗f8, then 28 d6 is again very strong.

c) On 27...♗c1, White has 28 ♗xc1 ♗xc1 29 d6 ♗g5 30 h4 ♗c8 (30...♗d8 31 ♖e7+ ♗f8 32 ♖c6 ♗e8 33 ♗h3!) 31 hxg5 ♗xf5 32 ♗c6 ♗f8 33 ♗d4 ♖b4 34 ♗xb5.

d) The *zwischenzug* 27...♗b4!? is more tenacious, but White simply replies 28 ♗e2:

d1) Black cannot save himself by the exchange sacrifice 28...♖c3 29 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 30 ♖e7+ ♗f8 31 ♖xc8 ♗xc8, since he loses a pawn as well: 32 d6 ♗b4 (32...b4 33 ♗e7; 32...♗e6 33 ♗d5) 33 ♗c6 ♗e6 34 d7 ♗e7 35 ♗xb5.

d2) All that remains is to try 28...♖c1 29 ♗c4:

d21) 29...♖b3 30 ♗xg7! ♗c1+ 31 ♗f1 ♗xf1+ 32 ♗g2!.

d22) 29...♖d3 30 ♗f1 ♗f8 31 ♖e7+ ♗xe7 32 ♗xe7 b4 33 d6 ♗f8 34 ♗e3! ♖c5 35 ♗d4 ♗xf1 36 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 37 d7.

d23) 29...♗f8 30 d6 b4 (or 30...♖b3 31 d7 ♗c1+ 32 ♗f1 ♗d1 33 ♗d4 ♖xd4, and now not 34 ♖xd4? b4 35 d8 ♗ ♗xf1 36 f3 ♗d3+ 37 ♗f2 ♗xe4 38 fxe4 b3, but 34 ♗xd4! ♗xd4 35 ♖xd4 ♗e7 36 ♖c6) 31 ♖h6+! (31 d7?! is weaker: 31...♗d8 32 ♖h6+ gxf6 33 ♗g4+ ♗g7 34 ♗xg7 h5 35 ♗g5 ♖e2+ 36 ♗h1 h6 37 ♗xh6+ ♗h7, when 38 ♗g7? fails to 38...f5! 39 ♗c6 ♗xd7! 40 ♗xd7 ♗b7+) 31...gxf6 32 ♗g4+ ♗g7 33 ♗xg7+ ♗f8 34 ♗d5 ♖e2+ 35 ♗g2 ♖c3 36 ♗xf7+ ♗g8 37 ♗xc3 bxc3 38 ♗xa7+ ♗f8 39 ♗xa6 c2 40 d7 c1 ♗ 41 dxc8 ♗+ ♗xc8 42 ♗a8.

Now let us look at what happened in the game.

27 ♖c6? ♗c5!

27...♗d6? would be a mistake in view of 28 ♗e5! ♗e8 29 ♗a1 ♗xe5 30 ♗xa2 ♗b7 (30...♗c8 31 ♗e2 f6 32 f4 ♗g4 33 ♗e4) 31 ♗xa7 ♗xc6 32 dxc6 ♗f8 33 ♗h3! ♗e7 34 ♗d7, and Black will have to give up his bishop for the rampaging pawn.

28 ♗h3?!

Though natural, this move is in fact dubious. It will soon become clear that the bishop has switched to a worse diagonal, while the black rook withdraws to a more advantageous square. However, White no longer had a win:

a) 28 ♗d4 ♗xd4 29 ♖xd4 (29 ♖xa7+ ♗f8 30 ♖xc8 ♗xc8 31 d6 ♗f6! 32 ♗c6 ♗e6) 29...♗c1!? 30 ♗xc1 ♖xc1 31 d6 ♗f8 32 d7 (32 ♖c6 ♗c8!; 32 ♗h3 ♗b7!; 32 ♗c6 g6!) 32...♗e7 33 ♖c6+ ♗xd7 34 ♖b8+ ♗c7 35 ♖xa6+ ♗b6, and Black's two united passed pawns fully compensate for the piece lost.

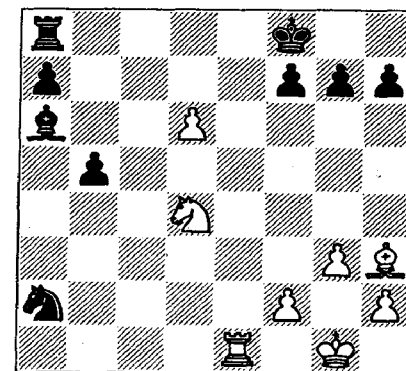
b) 28 ♗e5 ♗e8! (unsuccessful alternatives are 28...♖b4? 29 d6 ♖xc6 30 d7 ♖xe5 31 dxc8 ♗+ ♗xc8 32 ♗xe5 ♗f8 33 ♗xb5, and 28...♗b7? 29 d6 ♗xc6 30 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 31 d7 ♗e7 32 ♗f6 gxf6 33 ♗xe7 ♗d6 34 ♗e8+ ♗g7 35 d8 ♗ ♗xd8 36 ♗xd8 a5 37 ♗f1) 29 ♗a1 ♖b4 30 ♖xb4 ♗xb4 with equality.

c) 28 ♖e7+ (probably the most dangerous try) 28...♗xc7 29 ♗xe7 b4! (not 29...♗c1+? 30 ♗f1 ♗f8

31 ♗xa7) 30 h4! ♖c3 31 d6 (31 ♗xa7?! ♗c4 32 d6 ♖b5) 31...♗b5 32 ♗xa7 ♗d8! (32...♗f8? 33 ♗b7! with the threat of 34 d7 and 35 ♗xc3; 32...♗b8? 33 d7 ♗d8 34 ♗h3 with advantage to White) 33 ♗b7 ♗e8 34 ♗xb4 ♖b5 35 ♗e5 f6! (35...♗f8 36 ♗d4! gives Black a difficult position) 36 ♗d5+ ♗f8 (stronger than 36...♗f7 37 ♗xb5 fxe5 38 ♗e4) 37 ♗b2 and now 37...♖xd6! with a draw, but not 37...♖xd6? in view of 38 ♗a3! intending 39 ♗b8!.

28 ... ♗a8
29 ♗d4 ♗xd4
30 ♖xd4 ♗f8
31 d6 (D)

31 ♗a1 ♖b4 32 ♖c6 ♖xc6 33 dxc6 ♗c8 is in Black's favour.



B

31 ... ♖c3!

Black could already have made certain of the draw with 31...♗d8

32 d7 ♖b7 33 ♜xb5 ♖c6, but Karpov astutely senses that the position has turned in his favour as a result of his opponent's unsure play, and he decides to try for the win.

32 ♜c6?

At this stage Kasparov was oblivious to the danger. He should have forced a draw by 32 ♖g2! ♜d8 33 ♖c6 (threatening 34 d7) 33...♖c8 34 ♜xb5.

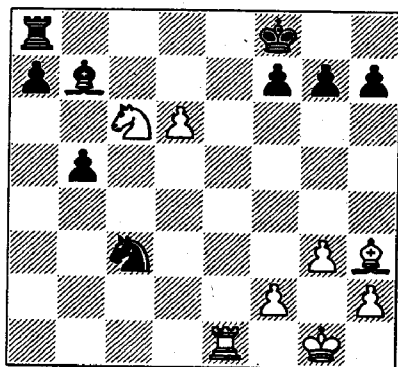
There was also another, less obvious, method, which was pointed out by Vadim Zviagintsev: 32 d7 ♖b7! (defending against 33 ♜c6 or 33 ♖g2), and now not 33 ♜f5 ♜d8 (since on 34 ♜xg7 or 34 ♜d6 Black has the simple 34...♖c6), but 33 ♜a1!. The point is that 33...a6 is answered by the pretty 34 ♜c6! ♖xc6 35 ♜xa6. The interesting try 33...a5?! is met by the *zwischenzug* 34 ♜a3! (stronger than 34 ♜xa5 ♖e7) 34...b4 35 ♜xa5. Hence Black's best course is to settle for the draw with 33...♖e7 34 ♜e1+ ♖f8 (but not 34...♖d6? 35 ♜e8 ♖c7 36 ♜c6!) 35 ♜a1. The moves could also be transposed, of course: 32 ♜a1 ♖b7 33 d7.

32 ... ♖b7! (D)

A draw would result from 32...b4 33 d7 b3 34 d8 ♖+ ♜xd8 35 ♜xd8 ♖d3.

33 ♖g2 ♜e8!

Kasparov may have been counting on 33...b4? 34 d7 b3 35 ♜b8!



W

♜xb8 36 ♖xb7 b2 (36...♜d8 37 ♖c6) 37 ♖c8, and White wins. However, Karpov is fully alert to the danger.

34 ♜e5?!

34 ♜a1 ♖xc6 35 ♖xc6 ♜e6 36 ♜xa7 was a more resilient line, although it isn't at all simple to hold the endgame after 36...♜xd6.

34 ... ♖f6!

35 d7

White can no longer save himself. 35 ♖xb7 ♜xe5! 36 ♜a1 b4 and 35 ♜d7+ ♖f7 36 ♜a1 ♖xg2 37 ♖xg2 ♖e6 are equally bad continuations.

35 ... ♜d8

36 ♖xb7 ♖xe5

37 ♖c6 ♖e7? (D)

A time-trouble error. There was an easy win by 37...e4! 38 ♜a1 ♖e7 (38...♜e2+ 39 ♖f1 ♜d4 is also possible) 39 ♜xa7 ♖d6 40 ♜a6 ♖c7 41 ♖f1 b4.

40 ♜xb5 ♖c6

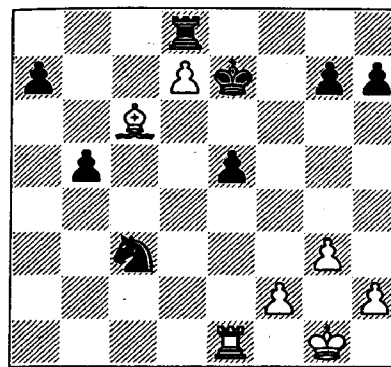
41 ♜h5?!

41 ♜e5! was stronger, and if 41...♜a8, then 42 ♜e6+ ♖c5 43 ♜e7 a5 44 ♜xg7, attacking the h-pawn too.

41 ... h6

42 ♜e5 ♜a8

The sealed move; 42...♜d5 was not bad either. The endgame is quite interesting, but we will break off here, since from this moment on the contest depended on adjournment analysis rather than the ability to find the strongest moves over the board. Black won on the 70th move.



W

38 ♖xb5! ♜xb5

38...♖d6!? 39 ♖d3 ♜xd7! 40 ♖xh7 a5.

39 ♜xe5+ ♖xd7

5 Chess in the Style of Jazz

Sergei Dolmatov

I want to show you some games of mine in which a fierce fight erupted literally in the first few moves – in the opening itself, or the early stage of the middlegame. The struggle to seize the initiative was conducted with sharp and for the most part highly unconventional means.

The games were all played years ago, when I was taking my first steps in big-time chess. This is no accident. The characteristics of youth are freedom from routine, optimism, and faith in our own powers (a faith which is sometimes excessive and comes from underestimating the opponent). Our thoughts take flight unburdened by experience and knowledge; no dogma stifles our inward freedom; interesting, striking games are often the result. With the passing of years, alas, this 'nonchalance' wanes.

A capacity for original thought is of paramount importance for beating a strong opponent. This is something difficult to learn and probably impossible to teach. Try

to develop this quality in yourself by analysing the early games of famous players who made their mark at a young age – such as Boris Spassky, Mikhail Tal and Alexei Shirov. Their ideas, conceived over the board rather than in quiet pre-game study, have an air of naïvety and directness. Sometimes they fail to stand up against dry mathematical scrutiny, but refuting these ideas proved so complicated that their opponents missed their way.

Allow me to make a comparison: this light, improvising manner has the same place in chess that jazz has in music. And jazz, of course, continues to be played today.

Dolmatov – Lerner
*National Qualifying Tournament,
Daugavpils 1978*
Philidor's Defence

1 e4	e5
2 ♘f3	d6
3 d4	exd4
4 ♘xd4	♙f6
5 ♘c3	♙e7

I suspect my theoretical knowledge ran out at this point, but that scarcely bothered me. After all, in this position common-sense moves are not hard to make. Just stick to sound principles – develop your pieces, fight for the centre – and you have nothing to fear.

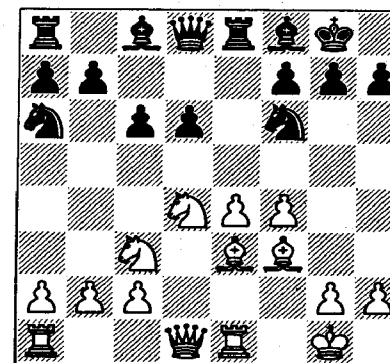
6 ♙e2	0-0
7 0-0	♙e8
7... ♘c6!?	
8 f4	♙f8
9 ♙f3	

White has obtained a powerful centre. Today I still cannot fault my opening strategy.

9 ..	♘a6
10 ♙e1	c6

If 10... ♘c5, then 11 ♘b3 ♘xb3 12 axb3 is not bad.

11 ♙e3 (D)



B

I played the rook to e1 so that on 11... ♘c5 I could defend my pawn

with the simple retreat 12 ♙f2. After 12... ♘e6 13 ♙d2 White would bring the queen's rook to d1 and only then start to think about further plans – whether to break in the centre with e4-e5 or prepare a kingside pawn advance with h2-h3 and g2-g4.

My opponent wasn't in the mood for patient defence; he decided to give battle in the centre at once.

11 ...	d5?!
12 e5	c5?

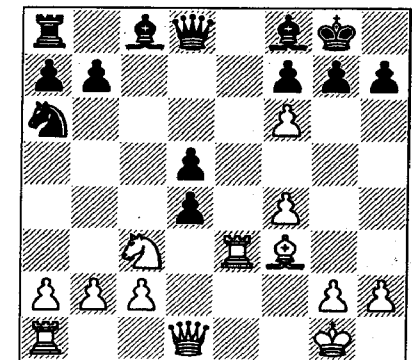
It was better to settle for the modest retreat 12... ♘d7.

Do you believe Black's action can succeed, with his bishop on c8 and his knight on a6? You don't? Then the refutation must be found!

13 exf6 ♙xe3

The 'point' of Black's play!

14 ♙xe3 cxd4 (D)



W

At the moment I am the exchange up, but two of my pieces are attacked. If either of them is taken, the material advantage passes to Black.

Konstantin Lerner was expecting only 15 ♖xd4 ♙c5; he hoped to exploit the pin on the g1-a7 diagonal. (Actually, after 16 ♖d2, it is not clear that he can.) He obviously underestimated my reply.

15 ♙xd5!

Now both pieces are immune due to 16 ♙xf7+. Also 15... ♖xf6 16 ♘e4 is bad for Black. To protect his queen he needs to develop his queen's bishop – but where? You can see at a glance that any move with this bishop has its drawbacks: 15... ♙d7 16 ♖h5 g6 17 ♙xf7+, 15... ♙e6 16 ♖xe6 or 15... ♙g4 16 ♖xg4 dxe3 17 ♙xb7.

15 ... ♙f5

16 ♖e5 ♙g6

I have removed one piece from attack, but extricating the other is more complicated. 17 ♘e4 is possible, when 17... gxf6 fails to 18 ♖e8, but I chose another route.

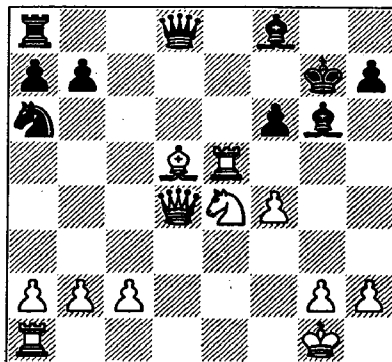
17 fxc7 ♙xc7

After 17... ♙xc7 18 ♖xd4, everything is suddenly clarified.

18 ♘e4! f6

19 ♖xd4! (D)

A picturesque position! The centre is wholly occupied by white pieces. If the rook is taken, then



B

even if there is no mate, White can regain his material by capturing the b-pawn with his bishop.

19 ... ♙xe4

If 19... fxe5 20 ♖xe5+ ♙h6, then 21 ♘f6 wins on the spot.

20 ♖xe4 ♘c5

My opponent was relying on this *zwischenzug*. Instead, 20... fxe5 21 ♖xe5+ ♖f6 (21... ♙g6 22 ♖e6+) 22 ♖xf6+ ♙xf6 23 ♙xb7 is hopeless for Black.

21 ♖f3 fxe5

22 ♖g4+

Black has won a piece after all, but his king can't escape a mating attack.

22 ... ♙h6

23 ♖e1!

All White's pieces must take part in the assault! He threatens both 24 ♖xe5 and 24 ♖e3.

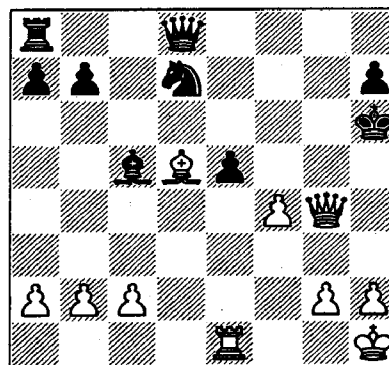
23 ... ♘d7

24 ♙h1!

In such cases you need to calculate the variations right to the end. To make this task easier, I recommend that you start with moves against which your opponent has a single forced reply. For instance, the queen check on e6 looks inviting, but you would have to examine not only 24... ♙g7 but also 24... ♘f6 and 24... ♖f6; in some lines you might miss the retort ... ♖b6+. The king move, renewing the threat of ♖e3, gives the enemy no choice.

24 ... ♙c5 (D)

24... exf4 25 ♖xf4+ is wholly bad for Black.



W

25 ♖d1!

Again White threatens to bring his rook to h3, but now there is the additional possibility of taking on b7 with tempo.

25 ... ♘f8

26 ♙xb7 1-0

The next example, like the foregoing one, is a specimen of what you might call the lightweight genre – it features a quick overrun of the black position. Incidentally, it shouldn't surprise you that I am not showing any games I lost. Of course you must carefully study your losses to detect the reasons for your errors. But right now, why should I spoil my pleasure by recalling my own failures?

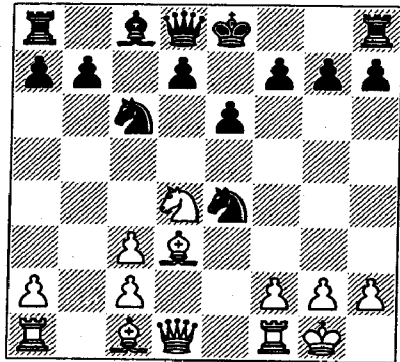
Dolmatov – Franzoni
World Junior Championship,
Graz 1978
Sicilian Defence

1 e4	c5
2 ♘f3	e6
3 d4	cx d4
4 ♘xd4	♘f6
5 ♘c3	♘c6
6 ♙e2	

This is rarely played (the usual continuations are 6 ♘db5 and 6 ♘xc6 bxc6 7 e5). While offering to transpose into the Scheveningen (6... d6), White allows a bishop sortie to b4, after which he will have to sacrifice a pawn. I had analysed this sharp variation with my coach Mark Dvoretsky, and then used it a couple of times with success. I don't know why no one

plays this way today; in my opinion the line gives White a highly promising position.

6 ... ♖b4
7 0-0 ♖xc3
8 bxc3 ♜xe4
9 ♖d3 (D)



B

9 ... ♜xd4

Here my knowledge ended. I knew that 9...♜xc3?! was dangerous for Black due to 10 ♖g4 or 10 ♖e1, and had only analysed 9...d5. I was acquainted with only one game in which that move had been played. This was Geller-Khasin, USSR Championship, Riga 1958, which went 10 ♖a3 ♖a5 11 ♖c1 ♜xd4 12 cxd4 ♖d7 13 ♖b1 ♖c6 14 ♖b4 ♖c7 15 ♖a3 a5 16 ♖xe4 dxe4 17 c4 f6 18 ♖d6 ♖d7, with about equal chances. I don't remember exactly how I was going to improve on White's play, but

there *was* a way – you can try to find it yourself. I later used my improvement successfully against Sergei Gorelov, but unfortunately I haven't kept the score of that game.

10 cxd4

It was worth considering 10 ♖xe4!?, but I was hoping to transpose back into my analysis after 10...d5 11 ♖a3.

10 ... ♜f6

White is a pawn down. As yet he has no attack, but he possesses two bishops and a certain advantage in space and development. In addition, as I recall, I had a healthy optimism and confidence in my powers – which is of considerable importance in this kind of situation. Incidentally, I would still enjoy playing such a position today. White's initiative is of an enduring nature and not easy to neutralize.

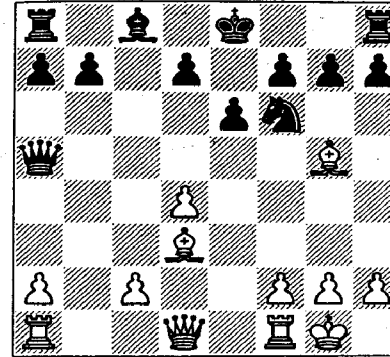
11 ♖g5 ♖a5!? (D)

12 f4!

An unorthodox decision (it isn't usual to put a pawn on f4 with your bishop on g5), but evidently the correct one. White shouldn't be in a hurry to exchange on f6. By advancing his f-pawn, he brings his king's rook into the attack. In answer to 12...♖b4 I would have given up a second pawn with 13 f5.

12 ... b6

13 ♖xf6



W

But now it *is* the right time to exchange. This enables White to gain a tempo with 14 ♖f3.

13 ... gxf6
14 ♖f3 ♖b8

After 14...♖d5 15 ♖xd5 exd5 16 ♖ae1+ ♜f8 17 ♖f3, Black would have the worse endgame. He isn't yet ready to fight such a patently rearguard action.

15 f5 ♖b7

16 ♖e4!

It is important to dash the opponent's hopes based on counter-pressure against g2. With heavy pieces on the board, Black's position is difficult – his king is under attack and his rooks are disunited.

16 ... ♖xe4

17 ♖xe4 ♖d5

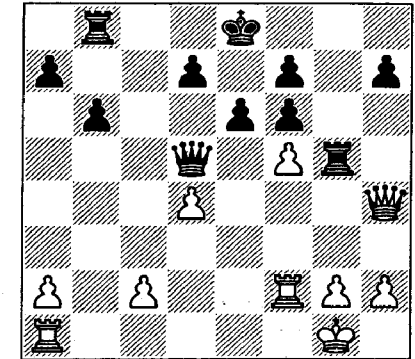
18 ♖h4 ♖g8

To me, this game contains a kind of riddle. It looks as if Black keeps making good, logical moves,

yet imperceptibly his game deteriorates to the point of hopelessness. Why this happens, where his play could have been improved – I don't know myself!

19 ♖f2 ♖g5 (D)

How is White to continue the attack?



W

The pressure on g2 is fettering my pieces. I need to deflect the enemy queen from the long diagonal, even if only for a moment.

20 c4! ♖xc4

21 fxe6 dxe6

21...♖xe6 was a more stubborn defence.

22 ♖f4!

A double attack on f6 and b8. But couldn't it have been carried out without the diversionary pawn sacrifice?

22 ... ♖b7

23 ♖c1!

This is the point! All my pieces are now in the attack. White's threats are irresistible.

23 ... ♖d5
24 ♜xf6 ♜e7
25 ♜h8+ 1-0

Dolmatov – Flesch
Bucharest 1981
Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6
2 d4 d5
3 exd5 cxd5
4 c4

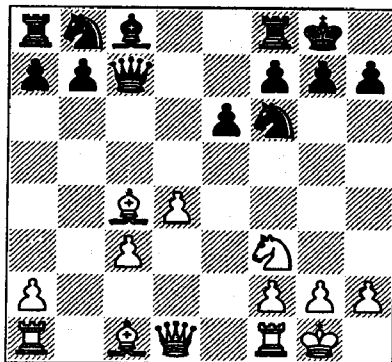
Against the Caro-Kann I always play the Panov Attack, and quite successfully too – it has brought me a large number of wins to date.

4 ... ♟f6
5 ♟c3 e6
6 ♟f3 ♟b4
7 ♟d3

The encounter Dolmatov-Kharitonov, World Junior Championship qualifying tournament, Sochi 1978 went 7 cxd5 exd5!. At that time the theory of 6...♟b4 was in its infancy, and Black's recapture on d5 with his pawn took me by surprise. I went on to win a good game, but acquired nothing from the opening. Since then I have started playing 7 ♟d3, transposing to a variation of the Nimzo-Indian. The resulting positions suit me very well. Why, then, do I avoid 1 d4,

which is not at all a bad opening move? I can't understand it myself.

7 ... dxc4
8 ♟xc4 0-0
9 0-0 ♟xc3?!
10 bxc3 ♜c7 (D)



W

At the end of the 1970s, World Champion Anatoly Karpov successfully employed a plan based on exchanging his dark-squared bishop followed by developing his knight on d7 and bishop on b7. Janos Flesch is aiming for a similar set-up, but goes about it inaccurately: the premature exchange on c3 increases White's options. The plan has to be initiated with either 9...b6 or 9...♟bd7. The latter move, incidentally, was played against me by Jonathan Speelman in a game I demonstrated at the second session of our school (see the book *Opening Preparation*).

11 ♟d3!

A natural and logical move, withdrawing the bishop from attack. I confess that at the time I didn't even look at the reply 11...♜xc3. (Today I am not quite such an optimist – I'm sure I *would* examine it.) After 12 ♟f4! (but not 12 ♟g5 ♟bd7, transposing to the Speelman game), White has a huge lead in development, ensuring him more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

11 ... ♟bd7

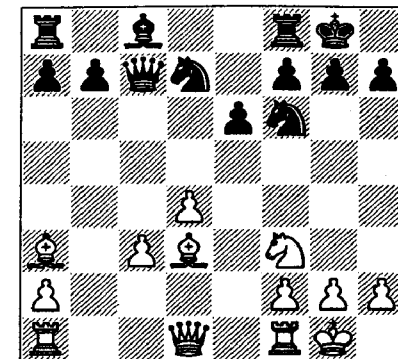
Black hopes to arrange his pieces on the Karpov model after 12 c4 b6 13 ♟g5 ♟b7, but I don't give him the chance.

12 ♟a3! (D)

An unconventional development for the bishop in this opening system. In his youth a chess player has fewer dogmas and more energy – it's easier for him to think up fresh ideas. At a more advanced age he knows exactly how players have played before in similar cases, and this knowledge sometimes prevents him from approaching the position without limiting preconceptions.

Here I succeeded in pinpointing the main weakness in the opponent's camp – the vulnerable d6-square. Actually, even after the normal bishop development on g5, White often tries to exploit this

same weakness later, with the manoeuvre ♟g5-h4-g3!



B

12 ... ♜e8

The usual square for the rook in this variation (this is where Karpov used to put it). It would have been better to move it to d8, but my opponent didn't figure out my intention.

13 ♟d2!

What is he to do now? The knight is heading for d6, and after 13...♜xc3 14 ♟c4 Black may well lose his queen. I am sure he should coolly play 13...b6, although after 14 ♟c4 ♟b7 15 ♟d6 White has an obvious plus.

13 ... ♜d8

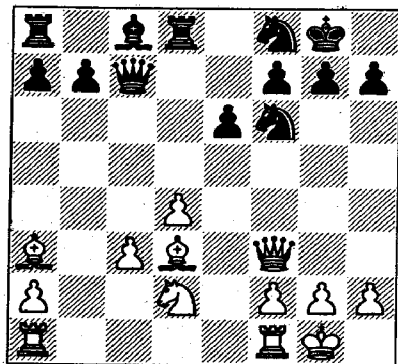
14 ♜f3

On 14 ♟c4 ♟f8, the d6-square would be covered. Therefore I activate my queen, guarding the c-pawn at last, and stopping the

black bishop from developing to b7.

14 ... ♘f8 (D)

Now what would you play for White?



W

15 ♖e4!

A typical stratagem! In such cases it's useful to exchange some of the opponent's developed pieces – then your own lead in development can be utilized more easily. I suggest an analogy with hockey: if one player is sent off, the advantage of five against four is palpable but not decisive. Remove another pair (one from each side), and defending becomes much more difficult with three against four. With two against three it is all but impossible.

Of course, when White played this move there were also considerations of a more concrete kind.

In particular, I wanted to make development difficult for the black bishop. However, knowledge of general laws such as the one just mentioned tends to make the decision easier – it gives us an idea of what to look for.

15 ... ♜xe4

16 ♙xe4 ♞d7

A sorry spectacle – the black pieces scurry back and forth. He evidently wants to play 17...♞f6, but of course I don't allow it.

17 ♙e7! ♞e8

18 ♙h4 f5?!

Anyone would surely have played this – it's hard to endure such powerful pressure for long. Nevertheless it would have been better to show patience and refrain from weakening the position.

19 ♙c2 ♞b6

20 ♙b3 ♙d7

21 ♙g3

Before taking the f5-pawn, it helps to improve the position of the bishop. It is amusing that this piece has, after all, made its way round to g3, the customary square for it in this variation.

21 ... ♜c6

22 ♜xf5 ♜xc3

23 ♙e5!

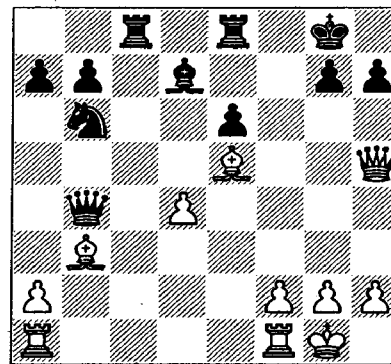
White has protected his d4-pawn and parried the threat of 23...♜xb3, which would now be decisively answered by 24 ♜g5.

23 ... ♜b4

The queen returns to the defence.

24 ♜h5 ♞ac8 (D)

How should the attack be continued?



W

25 f4!

I usually find it hard to decide on a change in the structure of the position – I prefer piece-play. However, this pawn move is very strong. The threat is not only to bring the rook into action via f3, but also to play f4-f5.

25 ... g6?!

25...♙c6 is bad due to 26 ♜g4! ♜e7 27 ♙xe6+, but after the move played White can still demolish his opponent's defence by force. The most tenacious move was 25...♞c4.

26 ♜h4 ♜e7

27 ♙f6 ♜f7

28 f5 ♞d5

29 fxg6 ♜xg6

30 ♞f3 ♞xf6

He has to give up his queen, which is tantamount to resignation.

31 ♞g3 ♙g7

32 ♞f1 ♞f8

33 ♞xg6+ hxg6

34 ♜g5 ♞c6

35 ♜e5! ♞b6

36 g4 ♞b5

37 d5! 1-0

Take note: having achieved a material plus, White didn't relax the pressure but looked for the most direct and energetic path to victory. In such situations a player sometimes feels that his work is essentially done, he eases off and starts to play carelessly. Consequently his opponent succeeds in organizing a defence or even obtains counter-chances.

The following game (one year earlier) was played in a similar vein: the same opening, the same energetic exploitation of the opponent's opening inaccuracies. I was then an international master, taking part in a strong grandmaster event for the first time. Bent Larsen was one of the favourites. Experienced grandmasters are prone to underestimating young and ambitious opponents. We had already crossed swords in the first round, when I managed to crush him

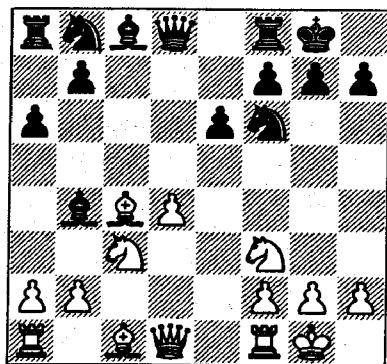
quickly with Black. As this was a double-round tournament, our next encounter soon came – again with a favourable result for me.

Dolmatov – Larsen
Amsterdam 1980
 Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6

Of course, Larsen didn't suspect how dangerous it was to play this opening against me.

2 d4 d5
 3 exd5 cxd5
 4 c4 Qf6
 5 Qc3 e6
 6 Qf3 Qb4
 7 Qd3 dxc4
 8 Qxc4 0-0
 9 0-0 a6 (D)



W

I didn't know anything about this move. Later I discovered that

it makes sense to prevent ...b7-b5 by playing 10 a4!?, along the lines of the Queen's Gambit Accepted, but at the time I didn't feel like weakening b4, and thought up a different idea.

10 a3!?

This too is prophylaxis against ...b5, but of a more sophisticated kind. In reply to 10...Qe7 I planned to withdraw my bishop to a2 first, and then answer the flank thrust 11...b5 with a counter-blow in the centre: 12 d5!. On the other hand if 10...Qxc3 11 bxc3 b5, then after 12 Qd3 the threat of 13 a4 is unpleasant.

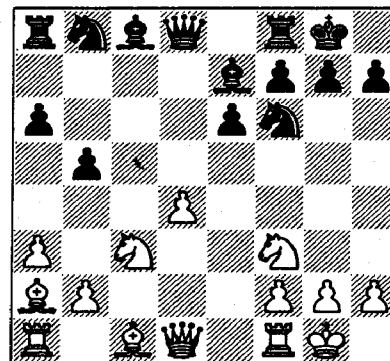
All the same, this last variation looks like the most logical reaction to White's idea. In lines where Black swaps on c3, White's a2-a3 is a wasted tempo: the pawn should either stay on a2 or be advanced to a4. At the 1982 Zonal Tournament in Erevan, Lev Psakhis had done some good preparation for his game with me, and headed for the position in question. There followed: 12...Qd5 13 a4 Qb7 14 Qe2 Qc8 15 axb5 axb5 16 Qxa8 Qxa8 17 Qd2 Qe4 18 Qxe4 Qxe4 19 Qxb5 Qd5 20 Qe1 Qg6 21 Qe2 Qc6, and Black had sufficient compensation for the pawn sacrificed. The game was soon drawn.

Of course, a clear-headed examination of the position is much

more difficult at the board, with the clock ticking away, than in home analysis. So if you manage to think up a sensible idea like 10 a3, its practical chances of success are very considerable – even if there is a solution to the problem facing your opponent.

10 ... Qe7
 11 Qa2 b5?! (D)

11...Qc6 is better.



W

12 d5!

What is Black to do now? He doesn't want to allow the capture on e6 – he would have to spend the whole game defending a clearly inferior position.

12 ... exd5
 13 Qxd5 Qb7?

Larsen had to exchange with 13...Qxd5. He was afraid of the answer 14 Qxd5 (stronger than 14 Qxd5 Qa7, threatening 15...Qd7).

Black would have to swap queens, as 14...Qa7 is too risky: 15 Qf4 (15 Qh5!?) 15...Qd7?! 16 Qh5, with strong pressure on Black's king-side. After 14...Qxd5 15 Qxd5 Qa7 16 Qf4, Black can't play 16...Qb7? 17 Qe3, but 16...Qd7 17 Qxf7+ Qxf7 18 Qxb8 is also bad for him. He can only settle for a permanently inferior ending with 16...Qe6 17 Qxe6 fxe6. That was the least of the evils, though. Objectively, Black would be justified in counting on a draw. "But why should I deal with a little boy so timidly?" the grandmaster must have thought.

14 Qxe7+ Qxe7
 15 Qg5

The two bishops in an open position guarantee White an overwhelming plus. All I need to do now is play natural attacking moves and make sure my opponent does not manage to jump out of the trap he has landed in.

15 ... Qbd7
 16 Qe1 Qc5

16...Qd8 would have offered more resistance.

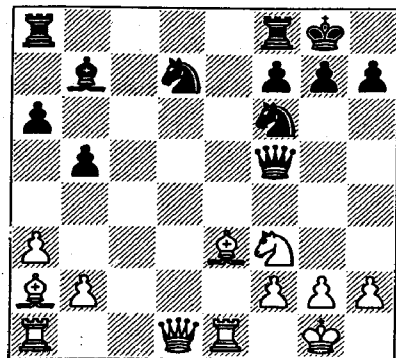
17 Qe3

Not, of course, 17 Qc1? Qxf3.

17 ... Qf5 (D)

17...Qh5 was relatively better, although after 18 Qg5 Qxd1 19 Qaxd1 Black has a difficult ending.

18 Qh4!



W

Black's queen is almost trapped. Of course, the routine 18 ♖d4? is weaker on account of the reply 18... ♗g6.

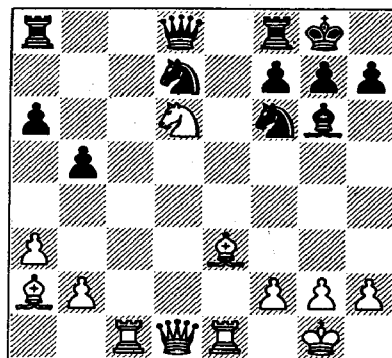
18 ... ♗e4
19 ♖g5 ♗c6
20 ♖c1 ♗b6
21 ♖e3

The game takes a highly amusing turn. My dark-squared bishop moves back and forth, gaining tempi all the time.

21 ... ♗d8
22 ♖f5

Since move sixteen, as you can see, only White has been playing. My opponent has roamed all round the board with his queen and finally brought it back to its starting square. In the meantime I have brought all my pieces into the attack.

22 ... ♖e4
23 ♖d6 ♖g6 (D)



W

The bishop has come across to guard f7. Of course White has various ways of winning, but I recommend that you always look for the kind of solution that I chose in this game.

24 ♗d4!

Total domination! There is no hurry to pluck the apple – it will fall of its own accord. First deprive the opponent of all reasonable moves, then finish him off. I was even sorry to play the remaining few moves; I just wanted to gloat over the ideal placing of the white pieces, since I could no longer do anything to improve it.

24 ... ♗b8

It was not for nothing that I had trained myself in 'prophylactic thinking'. I understood at once that Black was planning 25... ♖d8. The winning variation had to be calculated to the end (which is very easy

when the opponent's possibilities are so limited). It was now time to pick up my point and go home.

25 f4! ♖d8
26 f5 ♖h5
27 h3 ♖b6
28 ♗xb6 ♗xb6
29 ♖xb6 ♖xd6
30 ♖e3

It is usually after this kind of precise move that your opponent capitulates. (If the bishop had gone anywhere else, Larsen would have started thinking about 30... ♖d2.)

1-0

No doubt you have gained the impression that I only win with White. Then let me show you a game in which I had Black.

Van der Sterren – Dolmatov Amsterdam 1979 Réti Opening

1 ♖f3 d5
2 b3 ♖g4
3 ♖b2 ♖d7

3... ♖xf3 would lead to a wholly unexplored situation – the kind I try to avoid. Black's plan, which had brought me success a few times already, is simple: ...e6, ...c6, ...♖gf6, ...♖d6, ...0-0, ...♖e8 and at some point ...e5.

4 c4 e6
5 e3 ♖gf6

6 ♖e2 ♖d6

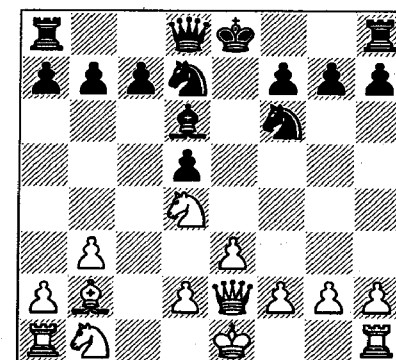
6...c6 may be a little more precise, so as to recapture on d5 with the c-pawn.

7 cxd5!? exd5
8 ♖d4

A typical device in Réti's Opening – the knight heads for f5.

8 ... ♖xe2
9 ♗xe2 (D)

What would you play now?



B

Of course Black could simply castle (9...0-0), but after 10 ♖f5 White would be a little better. I didn't want to concede the initiative to my opponent, and chose the most thematic continuation – although a slightly risky one.

9 ... ♖e5!
10 f4

I also had to take 10 ♖a3 into account. If then 10...c5, White has 11 f4! ♖c7 12 ♖f5. I planned

10...♖e4!, with 11 f4 ♗f6 or 11 ♗b5 ♗xd4 12 exd4 ♗g5 to follow.

10 ... ♗xd4

Once again I may remark nostalgically that young players are apt to play without prejudices. You might feel reluctant to leave your opponent with a strong bishop on the long diagonal. A mature player might not have risked this exchange (and would therefore have refrained from 9...♗e5). In actual fact, Black's sturdy position in the centre and the slight vulnerability of White's set-up (weakened by f2-f4) ensure me adequate counterplay.

11 ♗xd4

After the anti-positional move 11 exd4+? Black would gain the advantage by 11...♗e7 12 ♗xe7+ ♗xe7 13 ♗a3+ ♗d8 14 0-0 ♗e8 15 ♖c3 ♖b8!, to be followed by 16...♖c6.

11 ... c5
12 ♗b2 0-0
13 0-0 ♗e8
14 ♗d3?!

It was better to place the queen on f3.

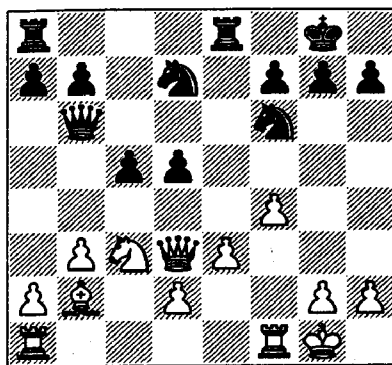
14 ... ♗b6

White will soon have to worry about either ...d4 or ...c4.

15 ♖c3 (D)

Now what would you play?

It's no good trying to come up with a brilliant idea at this stage.



B

First see if you can solve your problem (the d5-pawn is *en prise*) with some normal, useful move.

15 ... ♗ad8!

All my pieces are now in play. After 16 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 17 ♗xd5 ♖f6 Black wins his pawn back with the better game.

16 ♗ab1

Van der Sterren has decided to guard against any tries with ...c4. However, it is not only my c-pawn but also my d-pawn that is ready to advance. You can see how useful it is to have a number of strategic threats in reserve at the same time, while not hurrying to put any of them into action!

16 ... ♗c6
17 ♗f3 d4!

The moment has come! With his last move, Van der Sterren revealed his wish to start a flank attack; I respond with a central counterstroke,

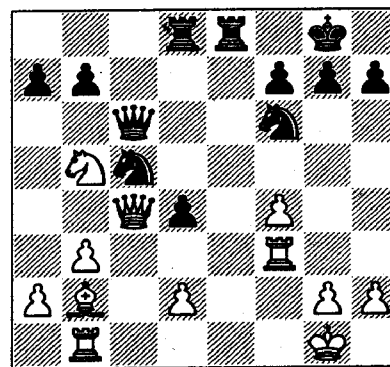
which, by the way, required precise calculation.

There was also another tempting possibility: 17...♖e4!?. White can't reply 18 ♖xd5? because of 18...♗d6 with a lethal pin on the d-file, but after 18 ♖xe4! dxe4 19 ♗c3 f6 20 ♗g3 he would maintain a playable position. I wanted more.

18 exd4 cxd4
19 ♖b5

Not 19 ♖e2 ♖c5 20 ♗c4 ♗e4 21 ♗e1 d3 22 ♗xc5 ♗xe2!.

19 ... ♖c5
20 ♗c4 (D)



B

My pieces are excellently placed, but the d4-pawn is under attack. In this sharp position Black had already foreseen a purely positional solution.

20 ... ♗b6!

By placing my queen on the same diagonal as the white king, I

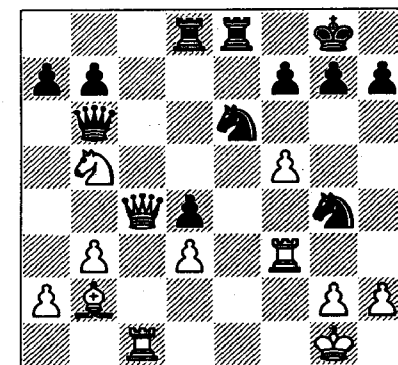
defend the d-pawn indirectly: 21 ♗xd4 is strongly answered by 21...♗xd4! 22 ♖xd4 ♖e6 23 ♗d3 ♗d8. At the same time I avoid the exchange of queens which might otherwise have occurred after 21 ♗c1.

21 ♗c1 ♖e6
22 d3

On 22 f5, Black has the very strong 22...♖g5 23 ♗d3 a6! and then 24 ♖xd4 ♖g4! or 24 ♖c7 ♗e4. The move White plays weakens the e3-square; a black knight immediately heads for it.

22 ... ♖g4
23 f5! (D)

Now what would you play?



B

23 ... ♖f8!

A sober response. In answer to 23...♖e5? White had prepared to give up his queen with 24 fxe6! ♖xc4 25 exf7+ ♗h8 26 fxe8 ♗+

and wins. Nor is 23...♔g5?! convincing: 24 ♖g3 ♕e3 25 ♖c5 ♖xc5 26 ♖xc5 ♕d1 27 h4!. But why plunge into unnecessary complications when your opponent's position is sufficiently compromised already? The threats of 24...♕e5 and 24...♕e3 are very dangerous. Black only needs to make sure that capturing the d4-pawn will not get White out of serious trouble.

24 ♖xd4 ♖h6!

White's h2-pawn is attacked. In addition his back rank is weak; the position of his rook on c1 is shaky. On 25 ♖h3, Black would not play 25...♖d2?! 26 ♖c3, but 25...♖xd4!! 26 ♕xd4 ♖d2 27 ♖f1 ♖e1 28 ♖c2 (28 ♖f3? ♖xf1+ 29 ♖xf1 ♖e3+) 28...♖xf1+ 29 ♔xf1 ♖f4+.

25 h3 a6!

The overloading of White's pieces makes itself felt. If 26 hxg4, then 26...axb5 27 ♖c3 ♖xd4. Nor is 26 ♖b2 any help: 26...♕e5! 27 ♖xc5 axb5 28 ♖f4 ♖xe5!.

26 ♖xg7! ♖xg7

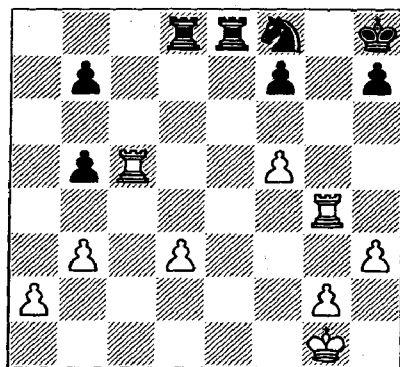
27 ♖g3 axb5

28 ♖xg4 ♖xg4

29 ♖xg4+ ♔h8

30 ♖c5 (D)

White has only two pawns for his piece. Nonetheless Black still has some difficulties in realizing his advantage. His pawns are all shattered and his knight is out of play.



B

30 ... ♖d6!

31 ♖xb5 b6

Black has given up a third pawn, but now his b-pawn can be defended from d7 by his knight.

32 ♖e4 ♖ed8

33 ♖ee5 ♔g7

33...♕d7 can be answered by 34 ♖ed5. There is no need to hurry with the knight move; the best thing just now is to bring the king nearer the centre. In the endgame you should utilize any breathing-space to strengthen your position to the maximum.

34 ♔f2 ♔f6

35 ♖e3 ♕d7

36 g4 ♖c8

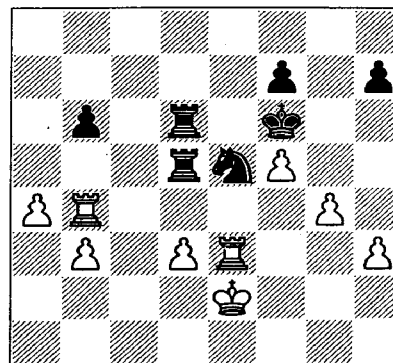
37 a4 ♖c5

38 ♖b4 ♖cd5

39 ♔e2 ♕e5?! (D)

So far my play has been logical enough, but at this point I weaken and start to play carelessly. There

was an easy win with 39...♕c5 40 d4 ♖xd4.



W

40 d4 ♕c6?!

40...♖xd4 was stronger.

41 ♖c4 ♕xd4+

42 ♔f2 ♕c6

43 ♔g3 ♕e5

44 ♖ce4 ♖c6

45 ♔h4 ♕d7

46 ♔h5 ♕g7

The impression is that Black has dithered a little, and made the win more complicated. The important thing in such cases is to keep calm and try to regain the thread of the game, without being in a rush to force events.

47 ♔h4 ♖c1

48 ♖b4 h6

49 ♔g3 ♖cd1

I now understood that I had to exchange a pair of rooks.

50 ♔f3 ♖5d4?!

Another inaccuracy! The correct 50...♖1d4! would have forced the rook exchange in more favourable conditions – on the fourth rank.

51 ♖b5 ♖d5

52 ♖xd5 ♖xd5

53 b4 ♖d4!

54 ♖e4 ♖d1

Of course Black must retain one pair of rooks. After an exchange on e4 the two pawns would be no weaker than the knight.

55 h4 ♔f6

56 ♔f4 ♖f1+

57 ♔g3 ♕e5

58 ♖d4 ♖g1+

59 ♔h3 ♔e7

Black has achieved a great deal; he has stopped the white rook from penetrating, activated all his pieces and cooped up the enemy king on h3. The threat is 60...♖a1.

60 a5 ♖xa5

61 ♖xa5 ♖a1

62 ♔g3 ♖xa5

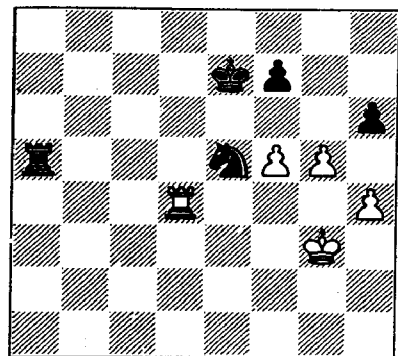
63 g5 (D)

63 ... h5!

When exploiting a material advantage you should avoid exchanging pawns. The fewer pawns on the board, the greater the drawing chances!

64 ♔f4 ♔f8

Again Black allows the game to drag on. Bearing in mind the principle I have just stated, I didn't



B

want to play 64...f6, and yet this would have led to a quick win: 65 gxf6+ ♖xf6 66 ♔d6+ ♗g7 67 ♔e6 ♘f7 68 ♔g6+ ♗f8 69 f6 ♘d8!.

65 ♔d6 ♗g7
66 ♔b6

On 66 ♔h6, I intended to imprison the rook with 66...♘g6+! 67 fxg6 fxg6, after which the game is decided by zugzwang: 68 ♗f3 ♔a4 69 ♗g3 ♔b4 70 ♗h3 ♔g4.

66 ... ♘g4
67 ♔b4 ♔a3
68 ♔c4?! ♔b3?!

We both missed 68...♔f3+! 69 ♗xf3 (69 ♗e4 ♔xf5!) 69...♘e5+.

69 ♔a4 ♘f2!

Black threatens 70...♔b4+!

70 ♔a7 ♔b4+
71 ♗f3 ♘g4
72 ♔e7

Or 72 g6 ♘e5+.

72 ... ♔b1!

Now the threat is 73...♔f1+.

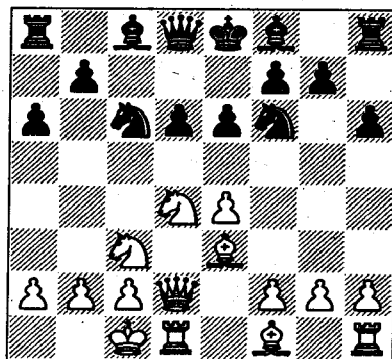
73 ♔a7 ♔b3+
74 ♗f4 ♔b4+
75 ♗g3 ♘e5
76 ♔a5 ♔g4+
77 ♗f2 ♔f4+
78 ♗e3 ♘c4+

0-1

Dolmatov – Lerner
Tashkent 1983
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 ♘c6
6 ♔g5 e6
7 ♗d2 a6
8 0-0-0 h6
9 ♔e3 (D)

Today I usually choose the more cautious 9 ♔f4.



B

9 ... ♔e7
10 f4 ♘xd4
11 ♔xd4

In our day this system is very popular, but at that time it was still in its infancy. The next phase of the game, then, is a case of improvisation at the board – by both sides. I should point out that today White more often places his pawn on f3, rather than f4.

11 ... b5
12 ♔d3 ♔b7
13 ♗b1 ♔c6?!

Black is preparing ...b4, and first prevents the knight from side-stepping to a4. The immediate 13...b4? would be met by 14 ♘a4 (after 14...♘xe4 15 ♗xb4, not only the bishop but also the g7-pawn is attacked). Nonetheless the move Black plays has a serious drawback, which is underlined by my reply. It was better simply to castle.

14 ♗e1!?

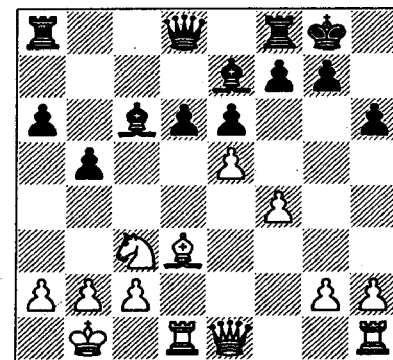
Now 14...b4 can be answered by 15 ♔xf6 ♔xf6 16 ♘d5. Furthermore there is e4-e5 hanging over Black's head, utilizing the opposition of the white rook and black queen on the d-file.

[As Grandmaster Kindermann has indicated, after 14...b4 15 ♔xf6 ♔xf6 16 ♘d5 a5 Black would maintain a defensible position. Therefore instead of 14 ♗e1!? he recommends 14 ♗e3!, when the

same defence would not be available owing to 17 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 18 ♗b6 – Dvoretsky.]

14 ... 0-0
15 ♔xf6 ♔xf6
16 e5 ♔e7 (D)

After 16...dxe5?! Black would not obtain enough for the queen, but 16...♔h4!? deserved serious consideration. There could follow 17 ♗e3 b4 18 ♘e4 dxe5 19 fxe5 ♗a5 20 ♘d6 ♔e7, though after 21 ♔e4 White's position would still be preferable.



W

17 f5!

The standard method of attack when Black has not been able to exchange pawns on e5. Of course, the move required exact calculation.

How does White continue the offensive if Black now takes the e-pawn? I hardly looked at 17...dxe5

18 f6 ♖xf6 19 ♖h7+. Black's rook, bishop and two pawns are stronger than the queen. The correct move is 18 fxe6!. Then giving up the queen (with 18...fxe6 19 ♖h7+) would be unfavourable, but otherwise Black would face serious difficulties.

17 ... b4

This is the move Lerner was counting on. What now? 18 ♖e4 exf5 is not good for White. I confess I am proud of my next move.

When conducting a sharp fight you need a high degree of alertness and ingenuity to exploit all your resources. If at some point your play is not energetic enough, your attack may come to a dead end and your opponent will seize the initiative. In the present case, Black has the bishop-pair; all he needs to do is beat off the immediate threats without suffering too much damage...

18 ♖e2!

An unpleasant surprise. The fearsome f5-f6! is threatened, for example: 18...♖a5? 19 f6! gxf6 20 ♖g3+ ♖h8 21 exd6, or 18...♙d5? 19 f6! gxf6 20 ♖g3+ ♖h8 21 ♖f4 ♖g7 22 ♖g3. If 18...dxe5, then 19 fxe6 is strong, as before.

18 ... exf5

19 ♖d4

Here is a consequence of Black having his bishop on c6! The knight

approaches the key point f5 with tempo.

19 ... ♖c7

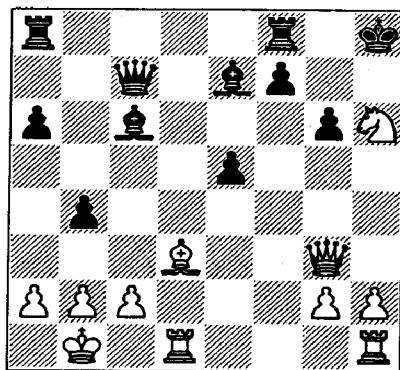
After 19...♙e4 20 ♙xe4 fxe4 21 ♖f5, the pin on the d-file is decisive: 21...d5? is refuted by 22 ♖xd5. If 19...♙d7, then 20 ♙xf5 is strong.

20 ♖xf5 dxe5

21 ♖g3 g6

21...♙g5 22 h4 ♙f6 23 ♖xh6+ ♖h8 is a more resilient defence.

22 ♖xh6+ ♖h8 (D)



W

Black's king is vulnerable; I have excellent attacking prospects. How do I keep up the pressure? Don't imagine that a stroke of genius is called for. Sometimes you *do* need to look for difficult, concealed solutions, but more often you simply have to play logical, precise moves one after the other, without making any mistakes.

23 ♖hf1

The hitherto inactive rook joins in the attack. The position is not yet ripe for combinations like 23 ♖xf7+.

23 ... ♙d5

Black had to protect his f-pawn. How should White continue now?

A good idea that suggests itself is ♖f5!. But if we are playing it, let us do so with tempo!

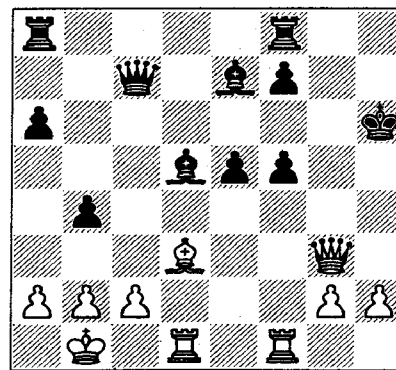
24 ♖h3 ♖g7

25 ♖f5+! gxf5

If 25...♖g8, White has the decisive 26 ♖h6 ♙f6 27 ♖e3 (simultaneously attacking d5 and f6) 27...♙g7 28 ♖xd5.

26 ♖g3+ ♖h6 (D)

After 26...♖h8 27 ♖xf5, mate is inevitable.



W

Here White has three continuations, two of which win. Unfortunately I chose the third, and botched

everything. Let me explain how this happened. In one sense, I was getting carried away – I thought I must be close to a beautiful finish to a game where everything had gone so well. On the other hand I didn't quite feel confident enough, and was on the lookout for some convenient way to go into a safe endgame with an extra pawn. I fell between two stools. My conflicting motives took their toll; they made me use up an inordinate amount of time, and at the crucial moment (when I was already in time-trouble) they stopped me from selecting and calculating the right line.

The first possibility is 27 ♖xf5. After 27...♙g8 the black king aims to escape to f8. To carry on the attack, White must sacrifice a rook with 28 ♖h5+.

The second way is 27 ♙xf5. Black's only reply – 27...♖c4 – leads to an endgame where White has an extra pawn: 28 ♖h3+ ♖h4 29 ♖xh4+ ♙xh4 30 ♖xd5.

Finally, White can give an intervening check with 27 ♖h3+ ♖g7, and only then play 28 ♙xf5. This time 28...♖c4 is no good, and in addition to 29 ♖h7+ White is simply threatening 29 ♖xd5. Black has only one defence: 28...♙xa2+! 29 ♖xa2 ♖c4+ and 30...♖h4.

I saw all this clearly, but still couldn't make the right choice.

Undoubtedly the simplest solution (and the one most in keeping with my style at the time) was 27 ♖xf5, heading for an ending where there would only be a few technical difficulties to cope with.

Yet I was sorry to stop attacking. At the same time, I failed to calculate the rook sacrifice fully. This was a pity. The sacrifice was a direct and beautiful way to win: 27 ♖xf5! ♜g8 28 ♜h5+!! ♔xh5 29 ♖h3+ ♔g5 (29...♜h4 30 ♖f5+ is no better) 30 ♖f5+ ♔h6 31 ♖h7+ ♔g5 32 ♜f1! ♜e6 33 h4+ ♔g4 34 ♖e4+ ♔h5 (34...♔g3 35 ♖f3+ ♔h2 36 g4) 35 g4+! ♔xh4 36 ♖h1+ with a quick mate.

I couldn't decide on the rook sacrifice, but didn't want to swap queens. That is why I plumped for the third possibility.

27 ♖h3+ ♔g7
28 ♜xf5? ♜xa2+!
29 ♔xa2

Not 29 ♔a1? ♜h8.

29 ... ♖c4+
30 ♔b1 ♖h4
31 ♖e3

I thought it would be hard for Black to defend, given his exposed king and the presence of opposite-coloured bishops, which in the middlegame ought to strengthen the attack. However, this verdict is false; I didn't consider that by posting a rook on the d-file Black could

prevent me from making aggressive use of my rooks. Besides, the position of the white king is by no means secure, especially after the e5-pawn is captured.

31 ... ♜ad8!

With opposite-coloured bishops you shouldn't always cling to material; the initiative is more important. Black is quite happy to offer his e-pawn – it is only getting in his way.

32 ♖xe5+

What else?

32 ... ♜f6
33 ♖c7 ♜xd1+
34 ♜xd1 ♖f2!

Active defence! Black not only attacks the bishop but also threatens 35...b3!. This explains my next move.

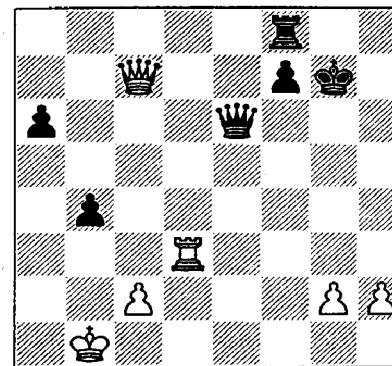
35 ♜e6 ♜xb2!

I had foreseen this counterstroke, but thought (quite rightly, I am sure) that I had to allow it.

36 ♔xb2 ♖f6+
37 ♔b1 ♖xe6
38 ♜d3 (D)
38 ... ♜c8?

With 38...♜e8! Black could have maintained the balance. The threat to exchange queens (39...♖e1+ 40 ♔b2 ♖e5+) would have tied White down and given him no time to develop an attack.

My opponent's moves just before the time-control prove weak,



B

and land him in a lost position again.

39 ♖f4 f6?!
40 ♜e3

The right tactics! With the opponent in time-trouble, avoid forced variations; play them only if they win. Of course Lerner was expecting me to check on g3, and would have moved his king instantly in reply. But how should he now react?

This is where you can't help losing your head. It's so easy to blunder, for instance with 40...♖d5? 41 ♖g4+ and 42 ♖xc8.

40 ... ♜c4?
41 ♖g3+ ♖g4
42 ♖d6

It's all over! With your flag dangling, you only look at checks and captures. Lerner, of course, simply had no time to assess the consequences of my quiet move.

The game was adjourned. It didn't last long after resumption.

42 ... ♜c3
43 ♖e7+ ♔g6
44 ♖e8+ ♔f5
45 ♖e6+ ♔g5
46 ♖xg4+ ♔xg4
47 ♜xc3 bxc3
48 ♔a2 ♔f4
49 ♔b3 ♔e3
50 ♔xc3 f5
51 h4! 1-0

6 Practical Chances in Chess

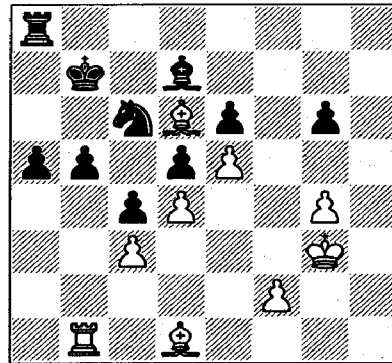
Benjamin Blumenfeld

Note: This article was first published in 1934

Purely specialized factors (positional understanding, the ability to calculate far ahead, etc.) are not in themselves sufficient for success in chess; you also have to apply those faculties which make for success in other forms of sporting contest and in real life: **quick-wittedness, the habit of speedily finding your bearings in a new context; the ability to take weighty decisions that have immediate effects, in circumstances that defy analysis; total dedication to a given aim, whether victory or salvation from defeat; in a bad position, self-control and endurance; in a good one, refusal to let your achievements go to your head.**

In the chess press, games are mainly discussed with a view to determining the theoretical correctness of the play. Yet this kind of elucidation does not always faithfully reflect the actual course of the struggle. **An experienced chess player will sometimes opt for a particular continuation without**

being at all convinced that it is the best of all those available; he merely judges that it gives the most chances in practice.



B

**Knoch - Nimzowitsch
Niendorf 1927**

From the diagram, play proceeded **44...b4 45 a4** (not **45 cxb4 dxd4 46 bxa5+ db5**, when Black emerges with two strong passed pawns). At this point, the obvious-looking continuation was **45...dxe5 46 axd7** (no better is **46 dxe5 axa4 47 cxb4 ab3 48**

bxa5 Axa5, which leaves Black with an extra pawn and winning chances in spite of the opposite-coloured bishops).

[After **45...dxe5 46 axd7 dxd7 47 cxb4 a4** Black wins without trouble. A more tenacious line is **46 axe5 axa4 47 cxb4 ab3 48 bxa5 Axa5 49 af4**, preparing for **ah4-g5** or **ae3** followed by **af4**. - Dvoretsky]

Instead of this, Nimzowitsch answered **45 a4** with **45...b3**, and there followed **46 axc6+ axc6**. The position now looks dead drawn; the black passed pawns on the a- and b-files are easily stopped, and a kingside breakthrough is impossible.

The game continued:

**47 g5 Aa7
48 Ab2**

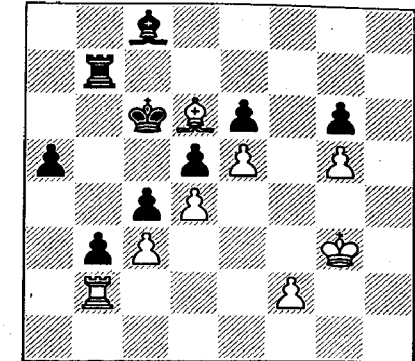
White blockades the black pawn. There was danger in sticking to purely waiting tactics, for instance **48 af3 Ab7 49 ag3 a4 50 aa3 b2! 51 Abx2 Ab3! 52 Abx3 cxb3 53 af3 ab5 54 ae3 b2 55 axb2 ac4 56 ad2 ab3**, and Black wins the bishop.

**48 ... Ab7
49 af4 Ac8**

Black's aim seems to be to try to penetrate on the h-file with his rook, so White's next move is natural. Yet Black provoked this reply so as to draw the white king

away from the queenside and carry out a prepared combination.

50 ag3 (D)



B

50 ... Ab4!

Black aims to obtain passed pawns which will advance with tempo, owing to the awkward placing of the white rook on b2. We now see why he didn't do the obvious thing and push his a-pawn at any time in the last few moves.

51 cxb4 a4

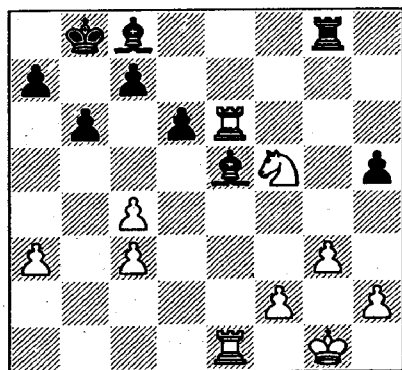
52 b5+

White gives up a pawn to open a path for his bishop; yet the rook and bishop prove helpless.

52...axb5 53 aa3 c3 54 Ab1 ac4 55 f4 axd4 56 af2 ac4 57 ae1 d4 58 ae2 ad5 59 af3 ab7 60 Ae1 ac4+ 61 af2 b2 62 f5 exf5 63 e6 Ac6 0-1

From the combination that Black carried out, we can see what

dangers were lurking for White in a position that looked harmless. Nimzowitsch was therefore right to think that the continuation he chose gave the best practical chances.



W

Knoch – Yates
San Remo 1930

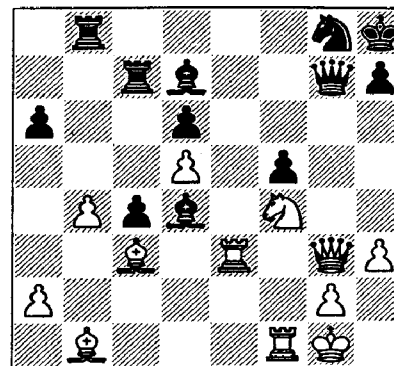
White has obtained a decisive advantage by fine play. He should now continue simply with 32 ♖f6xe5 dxe5 33 ♖xe5 [33 ♖e7!? is simpler – Dvoretsky], and if 33... ♗g5, then 34 ♖e7!. In this variation both players have approximately equal forces. Although doubled and isolated, the white queenside pawns are fulfilling their function perfectly well – holding up Black's pawns on the same wing. On the kingside, White can create two united passed pawns. The game would win itself.

Instead of this simple variation that leaves Black with no chances, White devised a combination. The game continued: 32 ♖e7 ♗xe6 33 ♖xg8 ♗xc4! (White was evidently counting on being able to meet 33... ♗xg8 by 34 f4).

Thanks to his combination White has come out the exchange up, yet Black has acquired definite counter-chances in the shape of mobile queenside pawns supported by the two bishops. Black even went on to win.

The conclusion from this is that given a sufficient advantage, we should select those continuations which enable us to achieve the win without allowing the opponent any counterplay.

We may also draw a further conclusion which is less of a platitude. Suppose there is the choice between two continuations: the first gives a decisive positional advantage with a balanced distribution of material; the second gives roughly the same amount of advantage, but with a material imbalance (as in our example with rook and knight against two bishops). In this situation it pays to select the first continuation. With balanced material the devices of attack and defence are more familiar; there is less scope for the unexpected.



W

Yates – Ahues
Hamburg 1930

White could have decided the game immediately with a fairly simple combination: 41 ♖g6+ hxg6 (41... ♗xg6 loses a piece) 42 ♗h4+, etc. Instead, probably without giving it a thought, he played 41 ♖h5, which at first sight looks very strong too.

There followed 41... ♗e5! (not 41... ♗xg3 42 ♗xd4+ ♗e5 43 ♖xe5, etc.) 42 ♖h1 ♗xc3! 43 ♖xe5 ♗xe5. White now has queen against rook and minor piece, but his kingside attack has evaporated and Black can work up active play. White eventually suffered defeat.

In connection with this example, we can make the following general observation. When an attack culminates in material gain, it is too early to be celebrating

victory. In such cases you often find that the whole character of the battle is altered; pieces that were well positioned for conducting the attack turn out to be on the wrong squares once the specific goal is attained; the play shifts to another sector of the board where the opponent's forces are more numerous or better placed. You should therefore exercise particular caution at critical moments when the win of material is possible, and carefully consider whether gaining a material plus is worth a deterioration in your position.

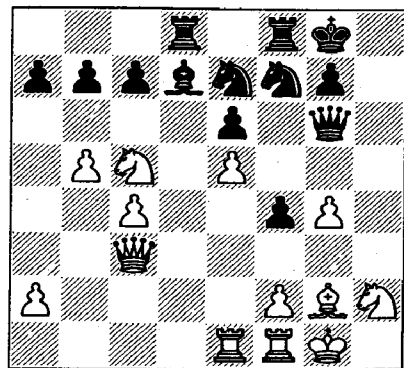
In the foregoing example White overlooked a line that was immediately decisive. Quite often, however, a player will deliberately reject a simple winning line because he wants to win 'brilliantly'.

The following game (see diagram overleaf) was a particularly sorry case.

In this position Black played an interesting combination:

31... ♖g5 32 ♖xb7 f3 33 ♖xf3 (the only way to avoid mate or loss of a piece) 33... ♖xf3+ 34 ♗xf3 ♗c6! 35 ♗xc6 ♖d3 36 ♗b2

All Black had to do now was gain a clearly won position with the natural 36... ♖xc6, which is



B

Sergeev – Grigoriev
Masters' Tournament,
Moscow 1932

what Grigoriev would surely have played in a blitz game. To the general amazement of the spectators, however, he sank into thought, and after some reflection played the unexpected 36...♖xg4+. There followed 37 ♗g2 ♜ff3 (aiming for a 'pretty' mate by bringing his knight to f4 or h4) 38 ♘c5 ♕f5 39 ♜e4 (the refutation Black had missed) 39...♖g5 40 ♘xd3, and White won.

In his quest for beauty Black forfeited his well-earned win. This example should be a lesson to many. **The best continuation is the one which leads most surely to the goal – of victory. The inward beauty of chess lies in purposefulness and in choosing the most economical means to achieve the**

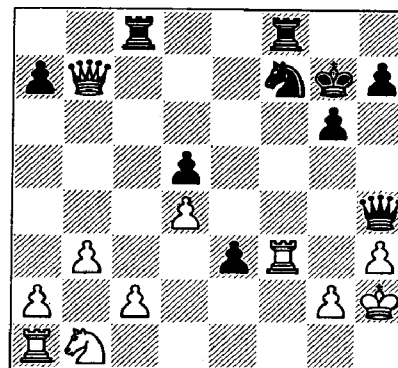
aim. Striving for dramatic effects – which stems from a false understanding of chess beauty – often has lamentable consequences.

If simple, clear solutions are what you should seek in a won position, the converse applies: in a lost (or considerably worse) position you should try to stir up complexities. In a situation where natural continuations condemn you to defeat, you shouldn't shrink from material sacrifices; the main thing is to obtain active counter-chances.

In particular, it is worth noting a characteristic feature of Alekhine's play: in inferior positions he doesn't allow his opponent's advantage to grow, but seeks to disrupt the natural course of events; he steers the game into a new channel and conjures up sharp play, if necessary by sacrificing. This hallmark of Alekhine's style remains particularly clear in my memory from the large number of games (mostly off-hand) which I played against him when he had yet to scale the summits of chess fame.

Similarly in Aron Nimzowitsch's games you may observe that he doesn't go to pieces in lost positions and sometimes saves hopeless situations by unearthing some practical counter-chance.

The following example is characteristic.



W

Nimzowitsch – Euwe
Karlsbad 1929

White looks doomed. His position is undeveloped. Black has a strong pawn on e3, which threatens to queen. White cannot take this pawn: 23 ♜xe3 is answered by 23...♖xd4, winning a piece. Another bad line is 23 ♜xf7+ ♜xf7 24 ♖xc8 e2. Yet in this gruesome situation Nimzowitsch kept his head and played 23 ♘c3, putting his knight *en prise*.

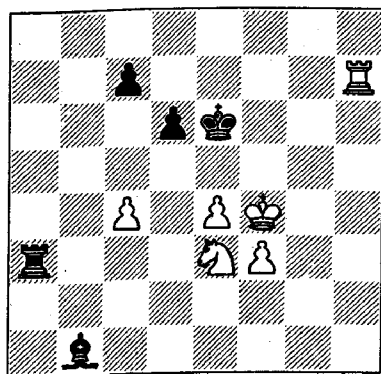
If Euwe had reacted to his opponent's desperate stroke with due attention, he would of course have found the winning continuation: 23...♖xd4 24 ♜af1 ♖e5+ 25 ♔h1 ♜c7, etc. Not suspecting any danger, however, he played the obvious

23...♜xc3?, and after 24 ♜af1 e2 25 ♜xf7+ ♜xf7 26 ♖xf7+ ♔h6 27 ♖f8+ he had to resign.

Some would say that Nimzowitsch scored an undeserved win, but I find it impossible to agree. Even the strongest master cannot calculate everything to the end; hence he will sometimes obtain inferior or even lost positions, not only against his peers but also against very weak opponents. **Keeping calm and finding counter-chances in a difficult position is a distinct virtue. In such circumstances, a mistake on your opponent's part is highly probable: having achieved a decisive plus in a long and tiring struggle, he will have exhausted most of his energy and will be in a mood for demobilization, imagining that all his difficulties are behind him. Thus it is incorrect to speak of luck and chance when a player saves a lost game. Luck favours the strong!**

Not all top-class players have their wits about them at all times, as we see from the next example.

Janowski resigned in the diagram position overleaf. Tarrasch rightly remarked: "Demoralized, Janowski laid down his arms too early. Instead he should have



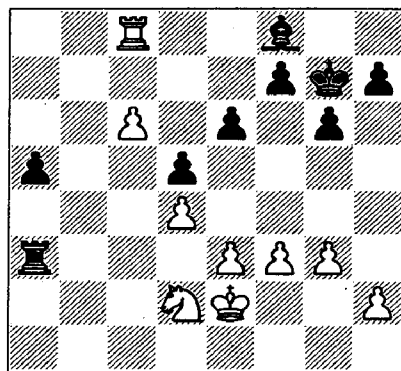
B

Em. Lasker – Janowski
*World Championship match (7),
 Paris 1909*

played his last card, by no means such a bad one. With 63...c5 64 Qd5? (the obvious-looking move, as Black seems to have no defence against mate) 64...Nxf3+ 65 Qxf3 Qxe4+ 66 Qxe4, he might have achieved a pretty stalemate. His opponent could of course have avoided this with 64 Nb7. Still, in the heat of battle the stalemate might have escaped him."

My own experience has repeatedly confirmed that practical chances can be found in the most hopeless-seeming position. Here is quite an interesting case.

Black's position is hopeless; the strong pawn on c6 should decide



W

Orlov – Blumenfeld
*Semi-final,
 Moscow Championship 1932*

the game. White played the striking move 36 Qc4.

If Black takes the knight he is blocking the c-file for his rook, and there is nothing to stop the white pawn from queening. Of course Black can play 36...Nc3, but then White replies 37 Qxa5 and the win is a matter of fairly simple technique. Similarly, 36...Na4 is hopeless after 37 Qe5 or 37 Qb6.

In any of these lines it is hard for White to go wrong – everything is simple and clear. I therefore decided to let him queen, at the price of allowing Black some practical counter-chances.

Play continued:

36...Na2+ 37 Qd1 Qb4 38 c7 dxc4 39 Nxb8

It seems to be time for Black to resign, because White will queen next move. Black has, however, one concealed chance to make the win difficult for his opponent.

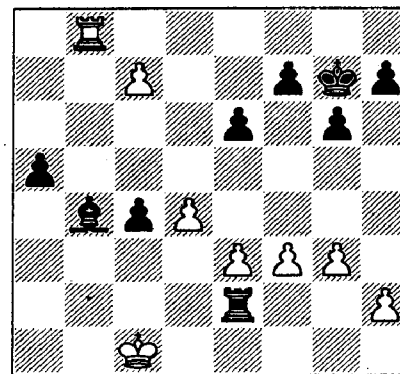
39 ... Nd2+

There is no hope in 39...c3 40 c8Q c2+ 41 Qxc2 Nxc2 42 Qxc2, when White has a technically easy win.

40 Qc1?

After this natural reply, the win is doubtful. White should have played his king to e1 without being afraid of the discovered check, for instance: 40 Qe1 Nxb2+ 41 Qf1 c3 42 c8Q c2 43 Qh8+ Qh6 44 Nc8 c1Q+ 45 Nxc1 Nh1+ 46 Qg2 Nxc1 47 Qf6, and the win is guaranteed. However, to decide on this line, White would need to perceive what complications arise after the 'natural' move.

40 ... Ne2! (D)



W

Black threatens to give perpetual check on e1 and e2. White must sacrifice the exchange.

41 Nxb4 axb4

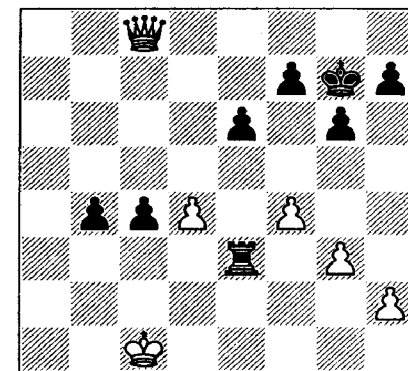
42 c8Q

White has to give up his e-pawn, as 42 e4 is met by 42...Ne1+, and Black draws either by perpetual check or by the pawn advance ...b3.

42 ... Ne3

43 f4 (D)

Now Black can force a draw. White should have gone for 43 Qc5 Nxf3 44 Qxb4, when Black plays 44...h5 followed by ...Nf5; in this line White does have winning chances, though they are difficult to exploit.



B

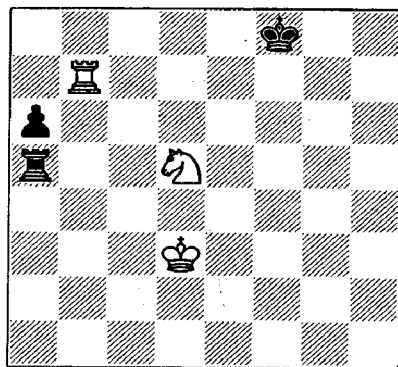
43...Nc3+ 44 Qb2 Nb3+ 45 Qc2 Nc3+ 46 Qd2 Nd3+ 47 Qe2 Nc3! (not 47...Nxd4 48 Qc5) 48 Qd2 Nd3+ 49 Qc2 Nc3+ 50 Qd2 Nd3+ 1/2-1/2

Indeed White can achieve nothing, for example: 51 ♖e2 ♜c3 52 ♛c5 ♜c2+ 53 ♔d1 b3 54 d5 exd5 55 ♛xd5 ♜xh2, and if 56 ♛xc4 then 56...b2, while 56 ♖c1 is met by 56...♜c2+ 57 ♔b1 c3!, and it is White who must seek salvation in perpetual check.

The ability to realize one's advantage coolly in a won position and keep one's presence of mind in a lost position are common to most experienced chess players; yet in clearly drawn positions, a loss of concentration and weakening of the will to win can be observed relatively often. In his tournament book of New York 1927, Alekhine reproached Spielmann for agreeing a draw in some games where he had practical chances – however minimal – of winning.

To illustrate how the dogged pursuit of victory can bring the desired result even in a drawn position, I append the following example.

As is well known, endings with rook and knight against rook (without pawns) are drawn. You would not think that having a pawn could harm Black's cause. Fahrni is a sufficiently experienced master to avoid blundering. It looks a waste



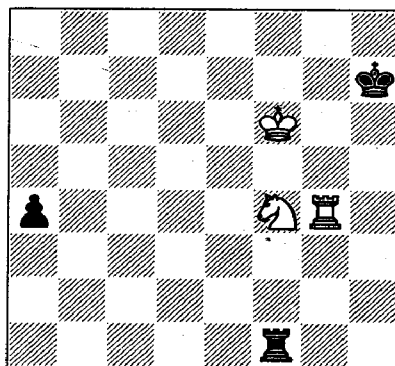
W

Rotlewi – Fahrni
Karlsbad 1911

of time for White to continue the fight.

Yet Rotlewi did play on. He had spotted a practical chance based on the very fact that Black has a pawn.

Subsequently, the position in the next diagram arose.



B

Black played the natural move 79...a3, whereupon a study-like finish ensued:

80 ♖f7 ♖h6 (if 80...♜h1, then 81 ♔d5!, followed by 82 ♔f6+, is decisive) 81 ♖g8! 1-0

The interesting point is that without his pawn, Black could save himself by playing for stalemate with ...♜g1.

It would be wrong to conclude from the foregoing that we ought to play in anticipation of our opponent's errors. A reader who carefully ponders the examples will realize that practical chances can be created only by accurately assessing the position and taking due account of its characteristic features.

7 Is it Worth Complicating?

Vladimir Vulfson

This is a question we often have to face, but there is no ready-made formula for answering it. Everything depends on the concrete circumstances. We shall learn to cope with this problem better if we look at how other players have solved it and elucidate their decisions critically. It will be interesting to trace the influence of a player's character and style on his choice of moves, and to detect those situations where owing to individual bias he fails to find the objectively best path.

Let us start by analysing two games by Mikhail Tal. The first was played in his heyday, the second many years later (I hope you will perceive the difference). In examining the games, we shall train ourselves to search independently for answers to the difficult questions which will inevitably arise.

Vasiukov – Tal
USSR Championship, Baku 1961
King's Indian Attack

1 e4 e6

2 d3	d5
3 ♘d2	♘f6
4 ♘gf3	♘c6
5 g3	dxex4
6 dxex4	♙c5
7 ♙g2	e5
8 0-0	0-0
9 ♖e2	♙e6

In this scheme of development Black usually plays ...a5, ...b6 and ...♙a6. By placing his bishop on e6 Tal practically condemns it to being exchanged for a white knight.

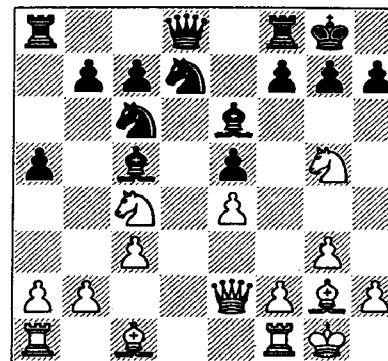
10 c3 a5

In this kind of position Black must not allow b4, which would guarantee White the initiative on the queenside.

11 ♘c4 ♘d7
12 ♘g5 (D)

Black must part with his bishop. If it is exchanged on e6, he can recapture with a piece or with the f-pawn. A third option is to give up the bishop for the c4-knight. Which would you prefer?

The white knight on c4 is the more dangerous of the two. It



B

might transfer itself later via e3 to d5 or f5. It is true that with a doubled pawn on e6 Black would be defending these squares and the f-file would be opened. Nevertheless, after the continuation 12...♖e7 13 ♘xe6 fxe6 Black's position looks suspect. Apart from playing to simplify with 14 ♙e3, in the hope of subsequently exploiting the weak pawns, White could also seriously consider 14 ♖h1 followed by f4. With the opening up of the game, the power of the white bishop-pair would tell.

12 ... ♙xc4!
13 ♖xc4 ♖e7

At this point Evgeny Vasiukov could have returned his knight to f3 and then played it to h4, provoking ...g6 – after which his bishop would obtain the excellent square h6. However, he was reluctant to retreat without special prompting.

14 ♙d2

White's plan is clear: ♖ad1, with ♙c1 to follow.

14 ... ♖ad8

15 ♖ad1 ♘b6

16 ♖e2

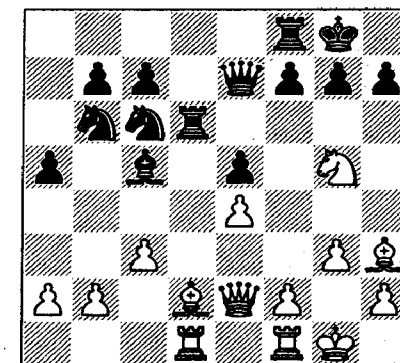
Not 16 ♖b5? ♖xd2!.

16 ... ♖d6

At this point, quite a good line is 17 ♙c1 (17 ♘f3!?) 17...♖fd8 18 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 19 ♙e1 with 20 ♙f1 to follow, gradually taking control of the queenside squares. With such a build-up, the two bishops would ensure White a slight but lasting positional edge. A good textbook example of how to handle such positions is the game Petrosian-Sax, Tallinn 1979 (see the supplement to this chapter).

17 ♙h3 (D)

What do you think Tal played here?



B

17 ... ♖xd2!?

An unexpected combination – though not for Tal, who had foreseen it before his previous move. Here is his own comment: “Looking at the position, you get the impression that the game must carry on in the same quiet strategic channel. There seems to be no place here for combinations. But that is false. When I started thinking about my 16th move I automatically turned my attention to 16...♖xd2, but very quickly realized that Black achieves nothing with this move, since after 17 ♗xd2 ♖d8 18 ♗c1 ♖xd1 19 ♖xd1 he remains the exchange down.

“Then a flight of fancy intervened. I saw that with the white bishop on h3 instead of g2, the combination would be playable. I spent 40 minutes on move sixteen. At first I wanted to play 16...♖d7, provoking 17 ♖h3 (with tempo!), but I decided that that would be too superficial. White could simply continue with 17 ♖c1, preserving a minimal positional plus.

“In the event I chose 16...♖d6, whereupon to my astonishment Vasiukov quickly played 17 ♖h3. The retort 17...♖xd2! was instantaneous...”

18 ♗xd2 ♖d8
19 ♗c1 ♖xd1
20 ♖xd1 ♗f6!

Black's idea is now clear. He threatens both 21...h6 (the white knight has nowhere to retreat) and 21...♗xf2+ 22 ♖h1 ♖e3.

Without doubt, Tal's ingenious combination is highly attractive. But is it sound? After all, even after capturing on f2 Black will only have one pawn for the exchange.

Tal gives the variation 21 ♖g2 ♗xf2+ 22 ♖h1 ♖e3 23 ♖h3 ♖xc1 24 ♖xf2 ♖xb2, with the better ending for Black. Another try – 21 ♖d7 ♗xf2+ 22 ♖h1 ♖e3 23 ♖xc6 – is refuted by 23...♖xg5! with the deadly threat of 24...♗f3+.

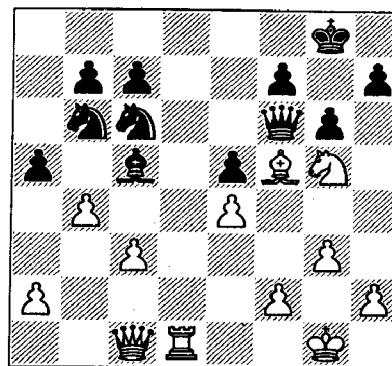
Yet White has a stronger defence. The players and annotators all overlooked the fairly simple 21 ♖d3!, taking control of the important squares f3 and e3. After 21...♗xf2+ 22 ♖h1 ♖c4 (22...h6? 23 ♖f3 ♗e2 24 ♖f1, and the queen is trapped), White has the pleasant choice between 23 ♖f3 ♗xb2 24 ♗xb2 ♖xb2 25 ♖xf7 (25 ♖xf7!?) 25...h6 26 ♖e6 hxg5 27 ♖f2+, and 23 ♗f1 ♗xf1+ 24 ♖xf1 ♖xb2 25 ♖d7. In either case Tal could hardly have saved the game.

Vasiukov thought of a defensive idea that was not bad either, but decidedly inferior to 21 ♖d3!.

21 ♖f5?! g6
22 b4! (D)

The play suddenly takes on a sharper character. Tal now has the

choice between several possibilities. Which is the strongest?



B

The game continuation was 22...axb4 23 cxb4 ♖e7. But why not place the bishop on d4? The answer is that after 23...♖d4 24 b5 ♖a5 25 ♖g4! ♗xf2+ 26 ♖h1 ♖e3, White has the defence 27 ♖h3!. White's position hangs by this tactical finesse.

Is it better to withdraw the bishop to e7 at once, or after exchanging pawns on b4? What is the difference? Either way Black can obtain two pieces for a rook if he wants, but the important thing is to stop White from activating his forces. After 22...♖e7!? 23 ♖d7 the c-file is not yet open, and Black has the excellent resource 23...♖b8!. Not that the consequences are by any means clear: 24 ♖g4 ♗xg5 25 ♗xg5 ♖xg5 26 bxa5 ♖c4 27 ♖c8!

♖xa5 28 ♖xb7! (28...♖xb7 29 ♖b1).

[With 28...c6! 29 ♖c8 (threatening 30 ♖b1) 29...♖e7! Black would retain the better chances, since the rook is prevented from penetrating and the passed a-pawn is securely blockaded. – Dvoretsky]

22 ... axb4
23 cxb4 ♖e7

[I suggest it was worth seriously considering the simple 23...♖xb4, with good compensation for the exchange. – Dvoretsky]

24 ♖d7 ♖d4

Tal writes: “Black doesn't want to simplify the position. He rejects 24...♗xg5 25 ♖xc6 ♗xc1 26 ♖xc1 bxc6 27 ♖xc6 ♖d6, and continues to focus his attention on the kingside.”

There was no point in going in for 24...♖xd7 25 ♖xd7 ♗xg5 26 ♗xg5 ♖xg5 27 ♖xc7 (stronger than 27 b5 ♖a5 or 27 a3 ♖c1) 27...♖xb4 28 a3!, when White obtains a dangerous passed a-pawn.

25 ♗xc7 ♖d8
26 ♗xb7 ♗xg5

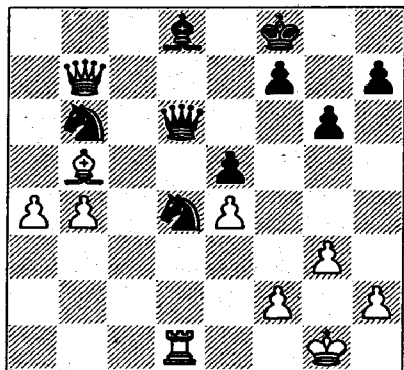
Objectively Tal has taken a risky decision. He has allowed his opponent not one, but two passed pawns on the queenside. He has, however, kept the queens on the board. In an ending with rook and pawn against two minor pieces, the presence of

an outside passed pawn becomes the key factor for assessing the position; but in the middlegame there are chances for an attack on the king – after all, Black has one piece more (though it is by no means a simple matter to bring the b6-knight and the d8-bishop into the attack). Moreover, Tal always handled his strongest piece with great dexterity – suffice it to recall his famous game against Oscar Panno in the 1958 Interzonal Tournament at Portorož.

27 ♖e8 ♕f6
28 a4 ♜f8!

It is important to drive the bishop away and free the queen for active operations.

29 ♖b5 ♕d6 (D)



W

Attacking b4 and threatening 29...♖f3+.

30 ♖c1?

With both players in time-trouble, White blunders away his best pawn – the a-pawn. After 30 ♖b1 ♖xb5 31 axb5 ♕d3 32 ♖c1 ♕xb5 33 ♖c8 Black would have no advantage. The simple 30 ♖g2 (30...♕xb4 31 ♕b8 ♕e7 32 a5) looks even stronger.

30 ... ♖xa4!
31 ♖g2
31 ♖xa4 ♖e2+.
31 ... ♖b6
32 ♖c5 ♕f6?

Black in turn goes wrong. Here is Tal's explanation: "At this point White unexpectedly offered a draw. Distracted, I forgot about the immediate 32...♖g7, which would have ensured an easy win, and instantly played 32...♕f6?."

We could draw an obvious conclusion about the importance of being 'distraction-proof'. By the way, take a good look at the position after 32...♖g7!. See how effectively the black knights are placed. Together with the other pieces they control all the entry squares!

33 ♕b8!

White acquires the counterplay to save himself.

33 ... ♕f3+
34 ♖g1 ♕d1+
35 ♖g2 ♕f3+
36 ♖g1 ♖e6
37 ♖c6 ♕d1+

38 ♖g2 ♕d4
39 ♖d6 ♕xe4+
40 ♖g1 ♕b1+
41 ♖g2 1/2-1/2

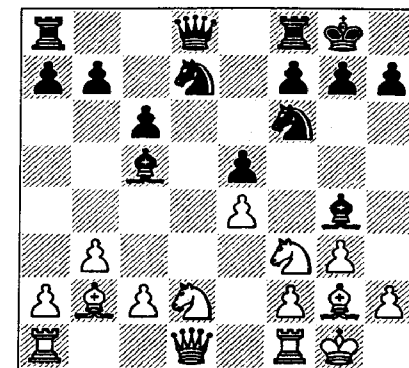
Throughout the game Tal was constantly taking risks. To begin with, he upset the balance by conceding the advantage of the bishop-pair in the interests of rapid development. Then he went in for a decidedly dubious combination. Finally, in his search for attacking chances, he allowed his opponent to obtain two united passed pawns. Such was his style of play at that time!

Ribli – Tal

Candidates Tournament,
Montpellier 1985
Réti Opening

1 ♖f3 d5
2 g3 ♖g4
3 ♖g2 c6
4 b3 ♖d7
5 ♖b2 ♖gf6
6 0-0 e6
7 d3 ♖c5
8 ♖bd2 0-0
9 e4 dxe4
10 dxe4 e5 (D)

The structure of the position is more or less the same as in the last game, isn't it? The only difference is in the placing of the black



W

queen's knight (it was on c6 before, whereas now that square is occupied by a pawn) and the white dark-squared bishop. Both these differences rather count in Black's favour.

Once again Tal will probably have to exchange his light-squared bishop for a knight, conceding the advantage of the bishop-pair to his opponent – not that that is of much significance here.

11 h3
11 ♕e2, followed by ♖c4-e3, was preferable.

11 ... ♖xf3
12 ♕xf3 ♕e7
13 ♖ad1?!

Another routine move, after which some difficulties already arise for White. He should have put his a-pawn on a4, preventing not only the exchange of dark-squared bishops with 13...♖a3, but

also the move 13...b5, which robs the knight of its rightful square c4.

13 ... b5!

14 h4?!

One error often leads to another. Evidently Zoltan Ribli has thought about his light-squared bishop and decided to bring it out to h3, but in so doing he weakens g4.

White's top-priority task is to re-deploy his knight that is poorly placed on d2. For this, there is only one route: via f1 to e3. Hence the right move is 14 ♖fe1!.

14 ... a5

Immediate occupation of g4 is not feasible; 14...♗e6 can be met by 15 ♗f5!. For the moment, therefore, Tal gives his opponent some worries on the queenside. He plans 15...a4.

15 c3

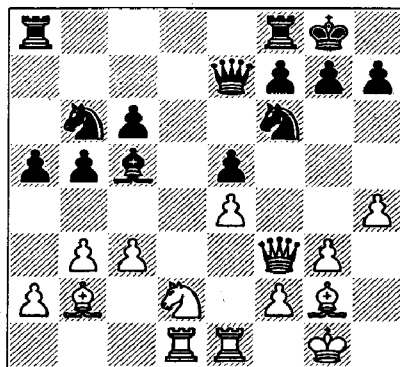
So as to meet 15...a4 by 16 b4. However, the opening of the a-file would surely have been the lesser evil, as another important square – d3 – has now been weakened.

15 ... ♖b6

16 ♖fe1? (D)

Better is 16 ♗e2 or 16 ♖h3.

White's whole attention has been fixed on the queenside in response to his opponent's last few moves. Ribli is oblivious to possible diversions on the other side of the board, and incautiously weakens the f2-point. This is promptly exploited



B

by Tal, who never seems to forget about the enemy king.

16 ... ♗e6!

17 ♗f5 ♖g4

18 ♖e2 ♖ad8

Already White's position is difficult. On 19 ♖h3, Tal was intending 19...♖d3! (with the threat of ...♖xg3+) 20 ♖g2 ♗xf5 21 exf5 ♖xf2 22 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 23 ♖xf2 ♖fd8 24 ♖e2 e4.

19 ♖f3 ♖d3!

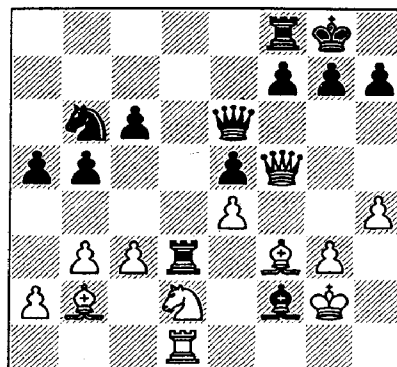
20 ♖g2 ♖xf2!

It must be said that Tal likes sacrificing two pieces for a rook. In other words, the previous game – where the distribution of forces was the opposite – was rather an exception.

21 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 (D)

Can White somehow organize a defence?

22 ♗xe6? is no good at all: 22...fxe6 23 ♖xf2 ♖xf3+ 24 ♖xf3



W

♖xd1. After 22 ♖xf2? ♗d6 White succumbs to a lethal pin on the d-file. The best defensive chances lay in 22 ♖e2! ♖xd2 23 ♖xd2 ♖e3 (23...♖c5 24 ♗xe6 fxe6 25 ♖g4) 24 ♖d3 ♖c5 (24...♗xf5!? 25 exf5 ♖c5 26 ♖f3 ♖c8) 25 ♗xe6 fxe6 26 ♖f3 (or 26 ♖f3). Black has an extra pawn, but the win is still a long way off. It is astonishing how resilient a chess position can be; for all White's numerous mistakes, he could still have held on!

22 ♖xf2? ♗d6

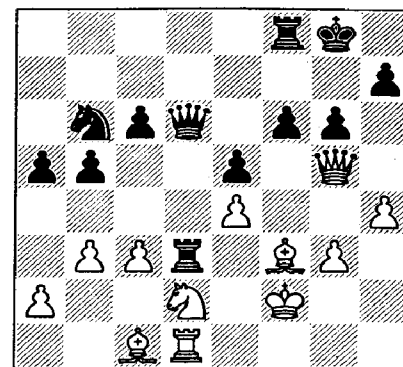
23 ♖c1 g6

23...♗c5+, with 24...♗xc3 to follow, is also strong.

24 ♗g5 f6! (D)

Black must deflect White's queen before opening the f-file. The immediate 24...f5 is unconvincing: 25 ♖g2 ♖xf3 26 ♖xf3 ♗d3+ 27 ♖f2 fxe4+ 28 ♖g1 e3 29 ♗xe5.

25 ♗h6 f5



W

26 ♖g2?!

If 26 ♖e1 or 26 ♖e2, then 26...f4 27 gxf4 ♖xf4 is strong. Perhaps it was worth trying 26 ♖e1!?

26 ... ♖xf3!

27 ♖xf3

In this case, if White continues 27 ♖xf3 ♗d3+ 28 ♖f2 fxe4+ 29 ♖g1, then Black has 29...♗xg3+ 30 ♖h1 ♖f2.

27 ... ♗xd1

28 ♖g5 0-1

White resigned as after 28...♗h5 or 28...♗d7 he is the exchange and a pawn down.

As you can see, the mature Tal had lost none of his imagination, and still had the same penchant for attacking and playing combinations. Yet he did so on a sound positional basis – he tried not to take the same liberties that had been characteristic of his youth.

The next game is quite different in character from the ones already examined. It has a direct bearing on the problem of prophylaxis. No wonder – the white side was played by Tigran Petrosian.

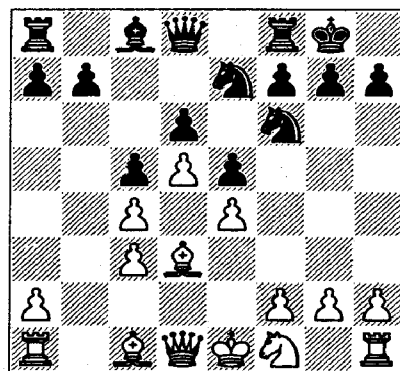
Petrosian – Ivkov
Nice Olympiad 1974
 Nimzo-Indian Defence

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 1 | d4 | ♘f6 |
| 2 | c4 | e6 |
| 3 | ♘c3 | ♙b4 |
| 4 | e3 | c5 |
| 5 | ♙d3 | ♘c6 |
| 6 | ♘f3 | ♙xc3+ |
| 7 | bxc3 | d6 |
| 8 | e4 | e5 |
| 9 | d5 | ♘e7 |
| 10 | ♘d2 | |

If 10 0-0, Black has the prophylactic reply 10...h6!, so that a knight move can be met by 11...g5, stopping White from opening the game with f4. Spassky-Fischer, World Championship match (5), Reykjavik 1972 continued 10 ♘h4 h6 11 f4 (reckoning on 11...exf4 12 ♙xf4 g5 13 e5! with complications favourable to White) 11...♘g6! 12 ♘xg6 fxg6. Here Spassky committed a serious strategic error by exchanging pawns on e5, leading to a static position where the white bishops had no scope. Fischer outplayed his opponent and won.

10 ... 0-0
 Black also has other options. The move played clearly reveals his intentions – to prepare the advance ...f5.

11 ♘f1 (D)



B

Petrosian realizes what his opponent is planning, and takes counter-measures in good time by transferring his knight to g3. It might have paid Black to switch plans with 11...♘g6, so as to jump to f4 with his knight if the occasion arose. White in turn could respond to this move flexibly by placing his knight on e3 and his pawns on g3 and f3, then pushing his h-pawn – profiting from his delay in castling. The opening move-order that Petrosian selected contains a fair amount of poison, yet for some reason it has not been used lately.

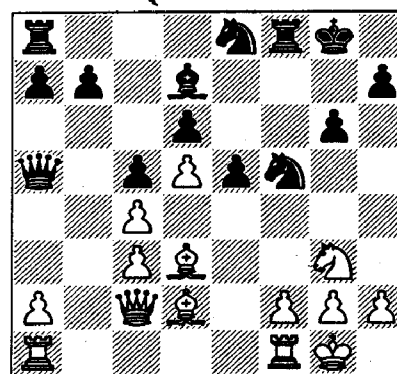
11 ... ♙a5

Black has decided to play on the kingside, so it is incomprehensible that he brings his queen out on the other wing. If he wanted to develop his queen on a5 he should have done so last move, when for one thing the reply ♙d2 was not possible, and for another Black still had the possibility of castling queenside.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 12 | ♙d2 | ♘e8 |
| 13 | ♘g3 | f5 |
| 14 | exf5 | ♘xf5 |

Or 14...♙xf5 15 ♘xf5 ♘xf5 16 ♙c2.

- | | | |
|----|------|---------|
| 15 | ♙c2! | g6 |
| 16 | 0-0 | ♙d7 (D) |



W

An important point is that in contrast to the King's Indian, the black knight cannot reach d4 – that square is covered by a white pawn.

17 ♘e4

17 f4! looked attractive, so as to open up the game and exploit the

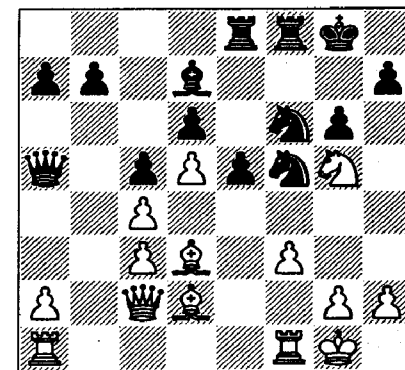
power of the two bishops. Perhaps White was put off by 17...♘xg3 18 hxg3 e4!? (18...exf4 19 ♙xf4, intending ♙ae1 and at some point ♙xg6) 19 ♙xe4 ♘g7! (19...♙f5 20 g4!?, 19...♘f6 20 ♙xg6!? hxg6 21 ♙xg6+ ♙h8 22 f5 with a formidable attack). However, Black's compensation for the pawn is scarcely adequate.

Petrosian wants to preserve his knight from exchange and is therefore in no hurry to start decisive operations. His opponent, however, is given time to strengthen his position.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 17 | ... | ♘f6 |
| 18 | ♘g5 | |

The knight is very strongly positioned here, as any attempt to drive it away with ...h6 will weaken the black kingside.

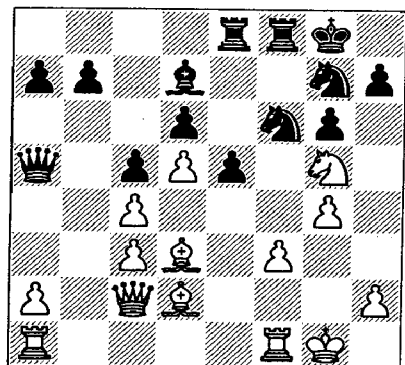
- | | | |
|----|---------|------|
| 18 | ... | ♙ae8 |
| 19 | f3! (D) | |



B

A typical Petrosian move. Taking control of the e4- and g4-squares, he prepares to play g4 at a suitable moment, to deprive his opponent's pieces of the f5-point.

19 ... ♘g7
20 g4! (D)



B

The ex-World Champion of course prevents the bishop exchange with 20...♗f5, which his opponent intended. All Black's minor pieces are now shut out of play. Despite this, the position still remains unclear. To be completely happy, White would have to clamp down on the queenside too, with a4.

20 ... ♖a4

Borislav Ivkov misses an excellent chance to confuse the issue, as indicated by Petrosian: 20...b5!? 21 cxb5 c4 22 ♗xc4 ♗xb5.

21 ♖b3! ♜b8

22 ♗c2! ♜a5

23 a4

White has thus succeeded in limiting his opponent's possibilities on the queenside. Yet even now the struggle is not over.

23 ... ♜c7

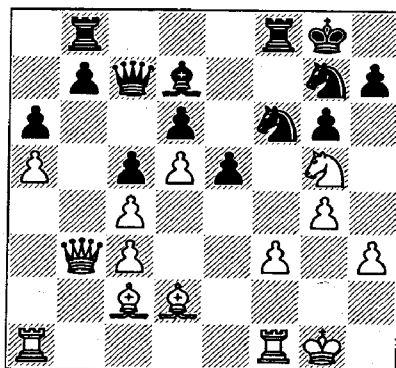
24 h3

White needs to bolster his g-pawn, so as to prepare f3-f4.

24 ... a6

25 a5 (D)

Otherwise he would have to reckon with 26...b5 – followed by ...c4, if White took on b5 with his c-pawn.



B

25 ... b5

26 axb6

Which piece do you think Black should recapture with? Who benefits from a queen exchange?

The answer, of course, is that Black does. In a cramped position

you need to exchange pieces! I believe that after 26...♖xb6! (27 ♖a2 ♖b2) Black would preserve excellent drawing chances.

Now recall the situation before White's 17th move. The question is, have Petrosian's refined manoeuvres been justified? Wouldn't it have been simpler to play 17 f4!?, 'cutting the Gordian knot' at once?

26 ... ♜xb6?

27 ♖a3

White will bring his queen across to the kingside for the attack, while the black queen lacks all scope.

27 ... ♜d8

28 ♖c1 ♜e7

29 ♖e1 ♜b2

"A lone man on the battlefield is no warrior." White will soon drive the rook off the second rank.

30 ♗d3 ♗c8

31 ♗c1 ♜b3

32 ♗c2 ♜b6

The work of prophylaxis is successfully completed. What now follows is, essentially, the first active move of the game.

33 f4! h6

34 fxe5 ♖xe5

35 ♖xe5 dxe5

36 ♗e4 h5

37 ♗a3

The harvest commences.

37 ... ♗xe4

38 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8

39 ♗xe4 ♜b3

40 ♗xc5+ ♜e8

41 ♜f1 1-0

In conclusion, I venture to show you a game of my own.

Tsariov – Vulfson
Moscow 1989
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5
2 ♗c3 ♗c6
3 f4 e6
4 ♗f3 d5
5 d3

White was evidently happy with the ending after 5...dxe4 6 dxe4. I was aiming for a more complex game.

5 ... ♗f6
6 e5 ♗d7
7 g3 b5!?

Usually this advance needs to be prepared, but here I had the chance to carry it out at once.

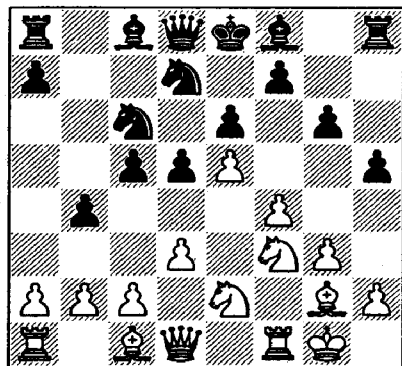
8 ♗g2 b4
9 ♗e2 g6?!

It was better to carry on in the same spirit with 9...a5 and then ...♗b6. However, I thought it was important to restrain White's kingside pawns.

10 0-0 h5 (D)

White's standard plan in such positions involves a kingside pawn

advance: h3, g4 and eventually f5. In the present case, however, he has another highly promising plan. Have a try at finding it.



W

Taking into account my backward development, it wouldn't be a bad idea to strike in the centre by pushing the c-pawn. Black's pawn on b4 makes it a little harder to implement this idea, yet White could very well play 11 c4 bxc3 12 bxc3, intending 13 c4. My opponent found a more cunning way to carry out the same plan.

11 a3!? bxa3

It was worth thinking about 11...a5 12 axb4 cxb4. Still, after 13 e3 (stronger than 13 c4 bxc3 14 bxc3 a6) White would be better.

12 bxa3!

I had only reckoned on 12 fxa3 b6 13 c4 d4, with obscure consequences.

12 ... a6

13 g5!

Another powerful move. We now see that 13...e7 can be met by 14 c4! xg5 15 cxd5!. Black therefore guards his c6-knight.

13 ... c7

14 c4!

Think what happens if the pawn sacrifice is accepted.

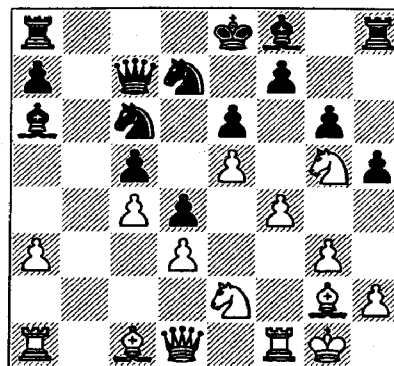
If 14...dxc4, then 15 a4. Then after 15...cxd3 16 c3, there is, for example, 16...d2 17 xa6 or 16...b7 17 b5 followed by 18 e4. This all looks extremely dangerous for Black, yet his defence can be strengthened. Instead of taking the second pawn, he should play the immediate 15...b7! 16 dxc4 b6 17 c2 d4, with a tenable game.

I preferred to close the position. Alas, this failed to get Black out of serious trouble.

14 ... d4? (D)

I had pinned my hopes on the inactivity of two white pieces: the e2-knight and the c1-bishop. Yet after the positional pawn sacrifice 15 f5, these pieces come to life. Another way for White to develop his initiative is 15 a4 b7 16 b1.

So White has two continuations to choose from. Which would you have preferred? Calculating the variations to the end would be



W

fairly complicated (especially in the 15 f5 line). At a certain point you would have to trust to intuition.

After 15 f5!? gxf5 16 f4 the threat is 17 fxe6, when there would be no rescuing the black king. The best defence is 16...h6, but then comes 17 fxf7!! fxf7 18 fxe6!:

a) 18...fxe6 19 xh5+ g7 (19...g8 20 d5 threatening 21 g6+; 19...g6 20 d5+ g7 21 h6+! xh6 22 f7+) 20 d5! x5 21 h6+! with a mating attack.

b) 18...fxe6 allows White two strong replies: 19 d5+ e7 20 g5+ e8 21 xh6 or 19 f3! with irresistible threats.

To be quite honest, I hadn't seen the pawn sacrifice. Tsariov did see it, and made a conscientious effort to calculate it. However, he got

bogged down in the mass of variations, and eventually didn't risk it. "I had the feeling I ought to play it, but I couldn't work it all out," he explained after the game. "Why should you work it all out?" I asked in amazement. "If an idea like that came into my head, I'd be sure to play the sacrifice."

Shying away from the sacrifice, my opponent persuaded himself he could win with 15 a4.

[He was right, too. This way White does indeed get a large plus, and he does it by simple means, without taking risks. From the practical viewpoint, White's decision was the most expedient. – Dolmatov]

15 a4 b7

16 b1 b6

17 b5 b8

Black's gaping wound – the b-file – needs covering up.

18 e4 d7

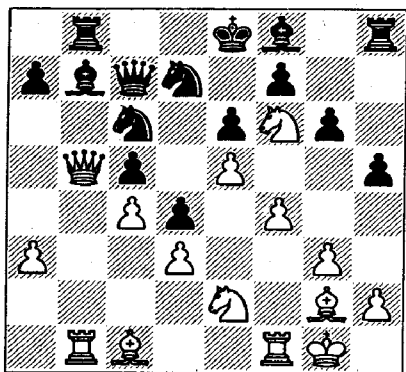
Otherwise the c5-pawn can't be defended.

19 f6+! (D)

The point of White's play. If 19...xf6, then 20 xc6+ is decisive. However, he clearly underestimated my reply.

19 ... d8!

It turns out that there is no forced win: 20 xd7 xd7 (intending 21...e7) 21 xc6+ xc6 22 xc6+ xc6. Black threatens



B

20...a8, and the e2-knight is out of play just as before.

20 a d2 a a8

Not 20...xf6? on account of 21 xc6!.

21 Wa4 Bxb1

22 Bxb1 Qxf6

23 exf6 d d6

24 h4!

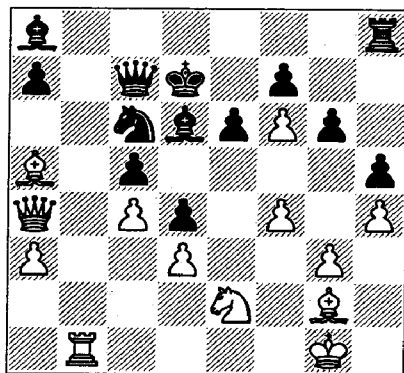
Increasing the pressure is not simple, but my opponent sets a cunning psychological trap. He defends against ...h5-h4, which might in some circumstances be playable, and thereby seems to demonstrate that his queenside initiative has dried up. I rose to the bait and incautiously made the natural move.

24 ... d d7?!

25 a a5! (D)

[Allowing a blow like this is unpleasant, of course, but how else was Black to bring his rook into

play? White was threatening to strengthen his position with h2 and g1-f3, or b5 and c1-b3. The f6-pawn is seriously cramping Black, whose king feels highly uncomfortable in the centre. It must be acknowledged that White has a distinct plus. – Dolmatov]



B

Again we face a dilemma. If 25...c8, White will strengthen his position with b5 and c1-b3. The alternative is to give up the queen with 25...b8. From the practical standpoint it is usually best to choose the most active continuation. Let us see: 25...b8!? 26 xc7 Bxb1+ 27 h2! (preparing g1-f3) 27...xc7. It would now of course be absurd to win the a7-pawn with 28 xc6?. After 28 g1 [28 c2 first is technically better – Dolmatov] 28...b2 the advantage is certainly on White's

side, but in mutual time-trouble Black should have played this way all the same.

25 ... c c8?!

26 B b5?

A picturesque position would arise after 26 Bb5! Wa6 (I was banking on this pin when I played 25...c8) 27 c1 Bb8 28 b3 c8. Now 29 xc5? fails against 29...Bxb5 30 xa6 Bxa5. However, what move is Black to make after, say, 29 h2 ...? He turns out to be in zugzwang in the middle-game! For example 29...b6 30 Bxb6 axb6 31 xc6, or 29...f8 30 Bxb8+ Qxb8 31 c7+.

26 ... B b8!

27 e e1 a a6

28 Bxb8 Bxb8

29 Bxb8 Bxb8

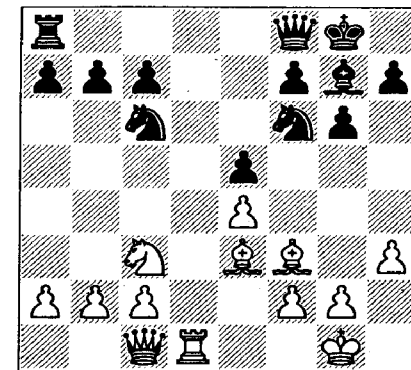
By forcing the queen exchange Black has attained equality. Subsequently my opponent became too obsessed with searching for winning chances – which have already melted away – and actually lost.

Supplement

Petrosian – Sax
Tallinn 1979
Pirc Defence

1 f3 g6 2 e4 g7 3 d4 d6 4 c3 f6 5 e2 0-0 6 0-0 g4 7 e3 c6 8 d2 e5 9 dxe5 dxe5 10

Rad1 c c8 11 c c1 d d8 12 Bxd8+ Bxd8 13 d d1 f f8 14 h3 xf3 15 xf3 (D)



B

15 ... a a6?!

A move recommended at that time by theory, on the basis of Timman-Matulović, Wijk aan Zee 1974, which continued 16 d5? Qxd5 17 Bxd5 Qd4 18 exd4 exd4 19 f4 We7 20 e5 Be8 21 Bxd4 ex e5 with a quick draw.

The straightforward 15...d8 leads to an ending which is favourable for White: 16 Bxd8 Bxd8 17 d1 Bxd1+ (17...We7!?) 18 exd1. Andersson-Hazai, Pula 1975 went 18...d4 19 f3 Qe8? (19...a6 20 a4 Qd7) 20 d5 c6 21 Qe7+ Qf8 22 Qc8 a6 23 c3 Qb5 24 a4 Qbc7 25 b3 Qf6 26 Qb6 Qe6 (26...Qe7 27 Qc5+) 27 Qxe6 fxe6 28 Qc5+ Qf7 29 Qd7 Qg7 30 Qf2 Qh4+ 31 g3 Qf6 32 Qe2 Qd8

33 ♖f2 ♖f6 34 ♘c5 ♘d6 35 ♘xe6+ ♜f7 36 ♘c5 ♙d8 37 b3 ♙a5 38 b4 ♙c7 39 a5 ♙b8 40 ♙e3 1-0.

In Petrosian's view Black should attempt to exchange dark-squared bishops with 15...h5!? followed by ...♜h7 and ...♙h6.

16 ♘b1! ♙d8 17 ♙xd8 ♜xd8 18 c3 ♜d3 19 ♘d2 ♙f8 20 ♜b1 ♜b5

If the queens are exchanged Black has an unpleasant ending, much as in Andersson-Hazai.

21 ♜c2 ♘d8

If 21...♙c5, then 22 ♙g5 followed by a queenside pawn advance with a2-a4 and b2-b4.

22 ♜b3 ♜d3?! 23 ♜c4 ♜d6 24 ♜e2 ♜e6 25 ♜d3 ♘c6 (better is 25...♜e7 followed by 26...♘e6) 26 a3 ♜e7 27 b4 ♘d8 28 ♘c4 ♘d7 29 ♙g4! ♘e6 30 ♘a5! b5 31 ♘c6 ♜e8 32 c4! ♘f6 33 cxb5 axb5 34 ♜xb5 ♘xe4 35 ♜c4 ♘d6 36 ♜d5 h5 37 ♙xe6 fxe6 38 ♜c5 ♘f5 39 ♜c2 ♙g7 40 b5 ♘d4 41 ♜c4 ♜d7 42 a4 ♘f5 43 ♜e2 1-0

8 Thoughts about a Book

Mark Dvoretsky

There are no hopeless positions; there are only inferior ones that can be saved. There are no drawn positions; there are only equal ones in which you can play for a win. But at the same time, don't forget that there is no such thing as a won position in which it is impossible to lose.

Grigory Sanakoev

In all my life I have only played two games by correspondence, and I am unlikely to play any more. Despite this, when I heard about the publication of *Third Attempt*, a collection of games by Grigory Sanakoev, the twelfth World Correspondence Chess Champion, I immediately acquired a copy. There were several reasons why.

In the first place, I recall that when Grandmaster Vladimir Simagin won the USSR Correspondence Championship in the mid-1960s, he spoke with great respect about the class of play of one of his opponents – Grigory Sanakoev. Acquainting myself with the book, I

can state with great pleasure that Simagin was right.

Secondly, as a chess trainer, I am in constant need of fresh, high-quality material. There is no lack of interesting games played in the chess world, but once published – in magazines or *Informator* – they become familiar not only to a coach but also to his students. However, the world of correspondence chess is almost entirely ignored by over-the-board players – unjustly, for plenty of ideas can be gleaned from it, striking and profound ones, diligently worked out in home analysis.

Books that confine themselves to giving the moves of games with explanatory variations may be instructive but are not very interesting. Happily, the book in question acquaints us not only with some fascinating duels but with the living human being who fought them – his experiences and thoughts, his opinions, his advice. One thing I find particularly impressive about the book is its use of quotations (always relevant, I may add) by

famous thinkers of the past. Chess is one of the branches of universal human culture, and we ought not to impoverish ourselves by focusing solely on its narrowly professional aspects.

Contrary to the author's conviction, I am sceptical about the prospects for correspondence chess. The appearance of computers capable of analysing at grandmaster level will inevitably tempt players to use their services to attain good competitive results. We know that many leading over-the-board grandmasters, including the thirteenth World Champion, have succumbed to the temptation and make every possible use of powerful computers for opening analysis. (The adverse effect of this process on the popularity of chess is obvious – after all, the fans are interested in a contest of personalities, not of machines.) And in correspondence chess the computer can be used throughout the entire game.

Yet there is no doubt that Sanakoev has always played independently and always will. What attracts him in chess is first and foremost the creative endeavour, the single combat of intellects; the result is only secondary. A reading of the book conjures up a highly congenial image of the author as a bright, uncompromising, self-confident

chess player, a man of wide learning whose thinking is nonetheless original. (I am sure this image is faithful, though I don't know Sanakoev personally – you cannot deceive an experienced reader!)

I could not help beginning by setting down my overall positive impression of Sanakoev's book, but that was not at all the reason why I 'took up my pen' (an outdated cliché in the computer age!). The theme of this chapter lies in certain fundamental problems of chess intelligence which my reading of the book prompted me to think about.

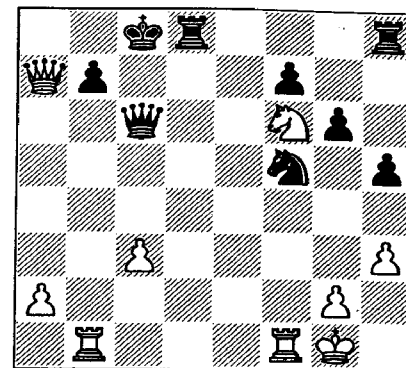
I chose what seemed to me the most notable encounters in the book, and gave them to Grandmaster Vadim Zviagintsev for study. His task was to look at the critical moments of the games and work out the difficult decisions for himself (without moving the pieces on the board, of course) – or sometimes to find the complete sequence of moves in the crucial phase, when the outcome of the game was decided. In many cases the young grandmaster at over-the-board play came to different conclusions from the experienced correspondence player. We singled out these situations for further analysis, discussion and clarification.

Let me state that even the most conscientious analysis, if scrutinized in depth, will prove to contain controversial points, sometimes downright errors – such is the complexity of chess. For that reason, the following critical examination of certain episodes from Sanakoev's games is by no means intended to cast a shadow over his book. I have adopted the same approach before, when writing about excellent works by Jan Timman and John Nunn – which I had used for training purposes with Sergei Dolmatov. Less significant books would simply not have come within the orbit of our attention.

A penchant for brilliant moves

If a chess player discovers a striking, outwardly attractive possibility, he often falls under its spell and can no longer resist its temptation. This must have caused every one of us to drop points at some time or other. I can't help showing you a memorable example from one of my own games.

The position looks won for White. Admittedly, 29 ♖b6? ♜c5+ is useless; 29 c4 ♜a6! is unconvincing, and so is 29 ♜a8+ ♜c7 30 ♜a5+ b6. A very strong move,



W

Dvoretsky – Peev
European Champions' Cup,
Plovdiv 1975

however, is 29 ♖f4! with the terrible threat of 30 ♖c4. If 29... ♜d6, then 30 ♖b6 ♜c5+ 31 ♖d4, and Black has no moves; while if 29... ♖d2, there is the beautiful variation 30 ♜a8+ ♜c7 31 ♖xb7+! ♜d6! 32 ♖d7+! ♜xd7 33 ♜a3+ ♜e5 34 ♜xd7+ ♜xf4 35 ♜c1 ♜e3 36 ♜e5 and wins.

Unfortunately I was enticed by a flashy move which I had been planning but which turned out to be none too effective.

29 ♜d7?!

Into a threefold attack!

29 ... ♖xd7!

The only defence; 29... ♜xd7 loses to 30 ♜a8+, while 29... ♜xd7 is met by the decisive 30 ♖xb7+ ♜e8 31 ♖xf5!. If 29... ♜d6, then if

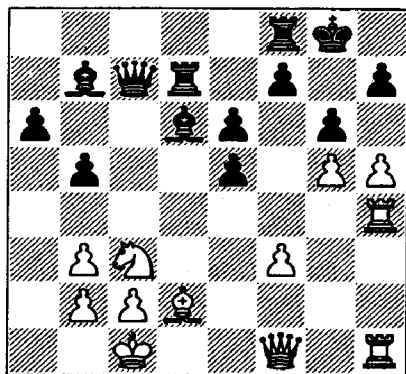
nothing else White has 30 ♖e5 ♗d5 31 ♖xf7.

After Black's move, I decided that the line I had planned – 30 ♗a8+ ♖c7 31 ♗xh8 – led to an immediate draw: 31...♗c5+! (but not 31...♖d2? 32 ♗e5+ followed by 33 ♖f2) 32 ♖h2 ♗d6+ 33 ♖g1 ♗c5+ 34 ♖f2 ♖d2 35 ♖f1 ♖g3 36 ♗f6 ♖xf1 37 ♗xf7+ ♖b8 38 ♖xf1 ♖xf2+ 39 ♗xf2 ♗xc3. However, my attempt to carry on the fight with 30 ♖xf5?! gxf5 31 ♗a8+ ♖c7 32 ♗xh8 proved even weaker on account of 32...♗e4!. After 33 ♖f1 ♖d2 34 ♗g7 peace was concluded, though Black's position is already slightly better.

My examination of Sanakoev's games showed me that one of his characteristics is this same tendency to select pretty moves – even at the expense, sometimes, of quality.

White intends 25 ♗h3 followed by 26 hxg6. How substantial are his threats? They must certainly be taken seriously. For instance, the natural 25...♖c8 is answered by 26 hxg6 fxg6 27 ♗h3 ♖d5 28 ♖b1!, preparing 28 ♖xd5.

In general terms, the knight is well placed on c3. From here it deprives Black of the convenient possibility of strengthening the



B

Engel – Sanakoev
Romanian Chess Federation
Jubilee Tournament 1976-9

e6-point with ...♖d5, and if the case arises it can move forward to e4. Hence 24...b4 seems indicated. In Sanakoev's view, after 25 ♖d1 ♖c8 26 ♖e3 White has a clear plus. (The knight, indeed, looks likely to jump to g4.)

But why should Black allow the knight to leave d1? Instead of 25...♖c8, a much stronger line is 25...♖c5! 26 ♗h3 ♖d5. Now the black rook is ready to go to c8. On 27 hxg6 fxg6, Black has everything securely defended, and ♖e3 will always be met by ...♖xe3. The consequences of 27 ♖xb4 ♖xb3 (27...♖xb4 28 ♖xb4 ♖c8 also merits attention) are uncertain. Black would clearly be justified in playing this way.

The above considerations are prosaic. The solution found by Sanakoev is, on the contrary, highly dramatic.

24 ... ♖a3!!

Black aims to answer 25 bxa3 with 25...♖xd2! 26 ♖xd2 ♖d8+ 27 ♖c1 ♗xc3 28 ♖b1 ♖d2 29 ♗c1 ♖xf3 30 ♖h3 ♖e2, when Black has the advantage. White does even worse with 25 ♖h2 ♖xd2! 26 ♖xd2 ♗xc3.

In the game, there followed 25 ♖b1?! ♖c5! (this time Black overcame the temptation to play for a 'brilliancy' with 25...♖xd2? 26 ♖xd2 ♗c3, counting on 27 bxa3? ♖c8! 28 ♗d1 ♖d8! – the attack can be repulsed by 27 ♗d3!) 26 ♗h3 ♗c6! 27 hxg6 ♗xf3! 28 gxh7+ ♖h8 29 ♗xf3 ♖xf3 and Black had an obvious endgame plus, which he duly converted into a win.

Zviagintsev too thought about 24...♖a3, but had doubts about playing it, because he saw that White could force a draw. He was unsure whether to go into the complicated position that results from 24...b4!?

25 hxg6! ♖xd2!

26 ♖xh7 ♗xc3!

27 ♖h8+ ♖g7

28 ♖h7+

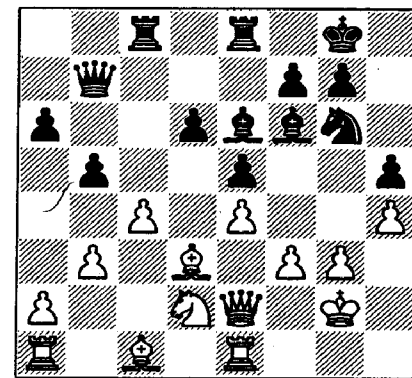
28 ♖h7+ gives the same result.

28 ... ♖xg6

29 ♖h6+ ♖g7

It would be wrong for the king to go forward (29...♖f5? 30 ♗h3+ ♖f4 31 ♖h4+ ♖e3 32 ♖e4+! ♖xe4 33 fxe4+ and 34 ♗xc3), so the game ends in perpetual check.

Sanakoev, of course, saw this variation and mentioned it in his book. He is a highly combative player, and in other circumstances he would hardly have given his opponent the chance to 'bail out' like this. In the present case, though, the magic of the beautiful move must have influenced his conclusion that other continuations gave White the advantage.



B

A. Zaitsev – Sanakoev
6th USSR Championship 1963-5

25 ... ♖xh4

26 ♖h1 ♖xg3!

The exclamation mark was added by me. Sanakoev himself considers

this move dubious. Here is what he writes:

"The temptation was too great... I recalled that 'the wise man understands it is simpler to deny himself a passion than to struggle against it afterwards' (La Rochefoucauld), but with the chance of a sacrificial attack against Zaitsev, I thought 'No! I can't chicken out.'

"If you assess the manoeuvre ... ♖xh4xg3 in purely objective terms, you have to conclude that 26... ♖g5 was stronger. After the modest reply 27 ♜xh5, Black would continue 27... ♖xd2 28 ♖xd2 bxc4, with a queenside initiative; White would have no serious counterplay. This would have guaranteed me long months of very pleasant analysis, with evaluations ranging from 'better' to 'much better'. On the other hand, the more uncompromising 27 cxb5 would allow the pawn sacrifice 27... h4! 28 bxa6 ♜e7 followed by ... hxc3, with a dark-square attack that would not be too simple to resist."

To me, the emphasis here seems wrong. After 26... ♖g5 27 ♜xh5 ♖xd2 28 ♖xd2 bxc4 29 bxc4 Black has a good game, but nothing more. By contrast, the piece sacrifice is not only tempting but very strong. You only have to look at the position after two or three more moves to be convinced of the

total correctness of Black's formidable attack.

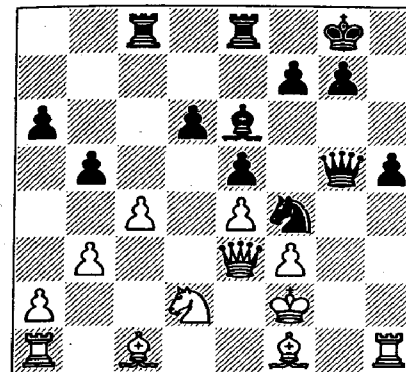
In situations like this, postal players are probably intent on analysing the variations as deeply and precisely as possible. An over-the-board player, on the other hand, with neither sufficient thinking time nor the right to move the pieces about, is obliged to break off his calculations at the earliest suitable moment and apply his positional judgement. That is why the ability to judge correctly is perhaps more weakly developed in correspondence chess specialists than in ordinary players; the former simply have less practice, as they solve most of their problems by analytical means.

Still, even if valid as a whole, no remark of this type can cover all cases. For example, acquainting myself with the games of Mikhail Umansky, another World Correspondence Chess Champion, I was impressed precisely by their deeply conceived strategy.

27 ♖xg3 ♖f4
28 ♜e3 ♜e7
29 ♖f2 ♜g5
30 ♖f1 (D)

30 ♜h2 is bad on account of 30... h4 31 ♖f1 bxc4 32 bxc4 ♖xc4 33 ♖xc4 ♜xc4 34 ♜b3 ♜ec8 35 ♖xf4 exf4.

30 ... h4



B

Sanakoev makes no comment on this move, though it is open to question – for after 31 ♜g1 the queen must retreat, the check on h4 being unavailable. However, ...h3 presently follows, and h4 becomes accessible to the queen again.

Black had another attractive attacking possibility, suggested by Zviagintsev: 30... bxc4! 31 bxc4 ♖xc4 32 ♖xc4 ♜xc4 33 ♜b3 ♜ec8. In my view, White would have no real saving chances after either 34 ♖xf4 ♜c2+ 35 ♖e2 exf4, or 34 ♖xc4 ♜g2+ 35 ♖e3 ♜xh1 36 ♖b2 ♜g2(h2) – and if 37 ♜c1, then 37... ♜xc4!.

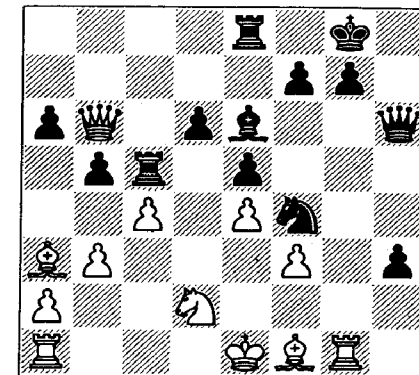
31 ♜g1 ♜h6
32 ♜b6!

White must prepare to withdraw his king to e1, which is no good at present owing to 32... ♖g2+.

32 ... h3
33 ♖e1 ♜c5!

An excellent move, cutting the white queen off from the important square e3. If 34 ♜xd6, there follows 34... ♜h4+ 35 ♖d1 ♜f2, and then ... ♜cc8-d8.

34 ♖a3 (D)



B

In such tense situations you can rarely succeed in conducting the attack by simply making one common-sense move after another. A moment comes when you need to exert yourself, to discover and calculate a clear-cut path to your goal. Doing this in a correspondence game is of course far easier than in a normal one. Sanakoev saw the correct solution, but then Zviagintsev found it too: 34... ♖g2+! 35 ♖d1 (35 ♖xg2? loses quickly to 35... ♜e3+ 36 ♖f1 hxc2+ 37 ♜xg2? ♖h3, while 35 ♜xg2 hxc2 36 ♖xg2 ♜e3+ 37 ♖d1 amounts to a transposition)

35... ♖e3 36 ♜xg2 hxc2 37 ♙xg2 bxc4 38 ♙xc5 dxc5 39 bxc4 ♙xc4! (39... ♗d4? 40 ♜c1 ♜d8 41 ♗a5) 40 ♙xc4 ♗d4+! 41 ♙d2 (41 ♙e2 or 41 ♙c2 would be very bad due to 41... ♗xc4+) 41... ♗xa1+ 42 ♙e2 ♗xa2, and Black undoubtedly has a winning position.

Why, then, did Sanakoev reject this line? For one thing, he was not entirely sure how to assess the end position. But the main reason was the alluring prospect of playing for a 'brilliancy'.

34 ... ♙d5?

35 exd5!

"White has no reason to plunge into a jungle of variations such as 35 ♗xd6 ♗e3+ 36 ♙d1 b4 37 cxd5 ♗xg1 38 ♙xb4 ♜cc8, or to try to clear up the position with the dubious 35 ♙xc5 ♙xb6 36 ♙xb6 bxc4 37 bxc4 ♜b8 38 ♙f2 ♜b2. In either case it is not exactly clear what he does about the pawn on h3." (Sanakoev)

35 ... ♗e3+

36 ♙d1 ♗xg1

37 dxe6

Black has no time to recapture on e6, e.g. 37... fxe6 38 ♙xc5 dxc5 39 ♙c2! h2 40 ♜b1! h1 ♗ 41 ♙d3. Otherwise, however, White takes on f7 and Black's king becomes highly insecure. On reaching this position in his analysis, surely, an over-the-board grandmaster would

intuitively reject 34... ♙d5 and look for something else.

37 ... h2

38 exf7+ ♙xf7

39 ♗xd6 ♗d4

Concrete analysis convinced Black that after 39... ♜cc8 40 ♗d5+ his king would be exposed to a decisive attack.

40 ♙xc5 ♗xd6

41 ♙xd6 h1 ♗

42 ♙c2 ♗h6

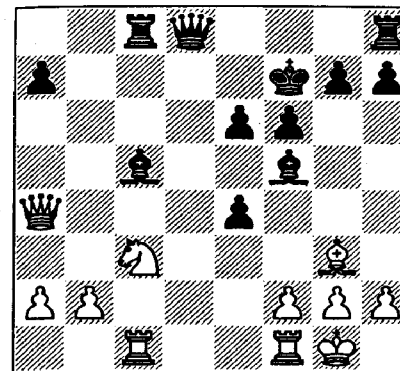
43 c5 ♗e3

44 a4!

White now has an advantage which is both material (three minor pieces for the queen) and positional, and which he duly conducted to victory.

Limits of calculation

As already noted, it is natural for over-the-board players to want to conclude their analysis of variations as soon as it is feasible. That way they save time and energy, yet sometimes they fail to probe into the position deeply enough; they will fail to notice some concealed tactical or strategic resources, and hence miss the strongest continuation. This cannot be helped; *"Real life is, to most men, a long second-best, a perpetual compromise between the ideal and the possible."* (Bertrand Russell).



W

Razuvaev – Believsky
USSR Championship, Minsk 1979

Yuri Razuvaev settled for the immediate win of a pawn with 18 ♙xe4?!, which allowed Black to equalize with 18... ♙xe4 19 ♗xe4 ♗d5!. The remaining moves were 20 ♗xd5 exd5 21 ♜fd1 ♙e6 22 ♙f1 ♙d6 23 ♙xd6 ½-½.

An intermediate rook move to d1 looked attractive, but in the case of 18 ♜fd1 Black has the strong reply 18... ♗e8! 19 ♜d7+ ♙g6, when 20 ♙xe4? fails to 20... ♙xf2+. White must attack the queen with the other rook.

18 ♜cd1! ♗e8?!

18... ♗b6 is a better chance, although after 19 ♜d7+ followed by 20 ♙xe4 the initiative remains with White.

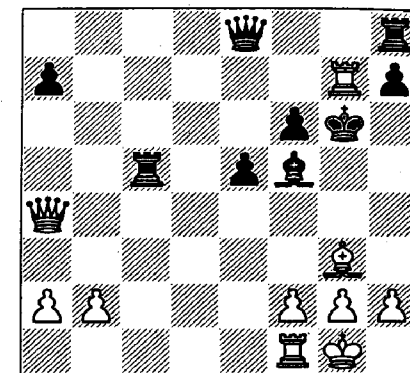
19 ♜d7+ ♙g6

20 ♙xe4 e5

Razuvaev analysed this far and rejected 18 ♜cd1. He was wrong!

21 ♙xc5 ♜xc5

22 ♜xg7+! (D)



B

22 ... ♙xg7

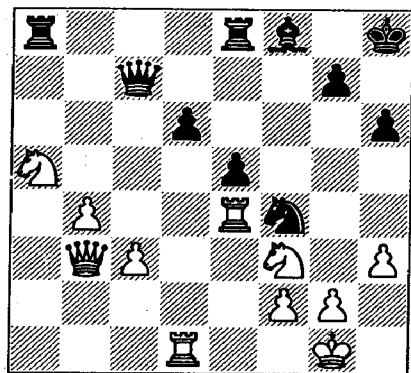
23 ♗xa7+

White wins his rook back and emerges with two extra pawns.

Many correspondence games supply us with excellent training material for overcoming this psychological barrier and widening the analytical horizon. After all, postal players normally continue analysing where over-the-board players would be certain to stop. The important thing is merely to choose examples where the difficulties facing the player are not analytical in nature, but conceptual and psychological.

"In the following game I pulled off what was probably the longest

and most complicated trap of my career." (Sanakoev)



W

Sanakoev – Ševeček
6th World Championship
1968-70

How should we assess this position? Sanakoev writes: "Black appears to have got what he wants. The knight remains out of play on a5; next move Black will carry out the long-awaited advance ...d6-d5. In the ensuing fight White will certainly have the better chances on account of his healthy extra pawn, but the outcome is wholly unclear."

I would alter the emphasis. White has a positional plus as well as a material one. After, for instance, the prophylactic 29 ♖e3!?, Black cannot play 29...d5 because of a line that Sanakoev gives: 30 g3

(he reaches this position by another move-order: 29 g3 d5 30 ♖e3) 30...♙xh3+ 31 ♔g2 ♙g5 32 ♙xg5 hxg5 33 ♖h1+.

Another dismal prospect for Black is 29...e4 30 ♙d4 d5 31 h4 (31 g3!? ♙xh3+ 32 ♔g2 ♙g5 33 ♖xd5) 31...♖ad8? 32 g3 ♙d3 33 ♙ac6 ♖d7 34 ♖dxd3. After other moves White will drive the knight back with g3 all the same, and obtain a won position.

However, why not expel the knight at once? The point is that Black has a neat tactical resource from which he emerges a pawn up.

29 g3 ♙xh3+
30 ♔g2 ♙xf2!

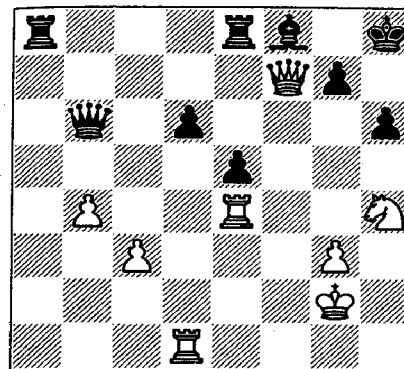
Here is a psychological barrier for an over-the-board player: on spotting this blow, he would be almost certain to break off the analysis and look for a more solid continuation. Sanakoev continued studying the position and came to the conclusion that White can now win by force.

That being so, 29 g3 was an excellent trap – creating the perfect illusion of a blunder. Black must have concluded that White simply missed the capture on f2.

31 ♔xf2 ♖b6+
32 ♔g2 ♖xa5
33 ♖f7 ♖aa8

The only defence.

34 ♙h4 (D)



B

"The end position of the trap", according to Sanakoev. That is not strictly true; the analysis is not finished yet. What is White aiming for? Not 35 ♙g6+ ♔h7 36 ♖f5, which is harmless due to 36...♔g8. The real threat is 35 ♖g4 followed by 36 ♙g6+ ♔h7 37 ♙xf8+, but Black can parry it by pinning the rook.

34 ... ♖c6

We now encounter a second psychological barrier; this, incidentally, is where Zviagintsev stumbled, having overcome the first one.

35 ♙g6+ ♔h7
36 ♖f5

It turns out that with his queen on c6 Black cannot defend himself, since 36...♔g8 now comes up against 37 ♖xf8+! ♖xf8 38 ♙e7+. A splendid conception!

36 ... ♖xc3

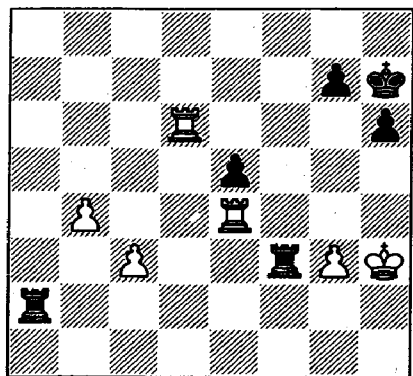
37 ♖c4! 1-0

Black resigned due to 37...♖xc4 38 ♙xe5+ or 37...♖b2+ 38 ♖c2 ♖xb4 39 ♙xf8+ ♔g8 40 ♖h7+ ♔xf8 41 ♖f1+ ♔e7 42 ♖xg7+. This variation is not an integral part of the trap, since it is not compulsory – White has other ways of winning.

The attentive reader may be wondering why I did not award two exclamation marks to 29 g3, as Sanakoev does. The answer is that I have doubts about the move's objective strength. Black had an extra defensive possibility in 34...♖a7!. Sanakoev considers that after the continuation 35 ♙g6+ ♔h7 36 ♙xf8+ ♖xf8 37 ♖xa7 ♖xa7 38 ♖xd6 White wins easily, since the counter-attack on the second rank is useless: after 38...♖a2+ 39 ♔h3, if 39...♖ff2 then the king escapes the checks via g4. In fact, though, a counter-attack is also possible on the third rank: 39...♖f3! (D).

For example, 40 ♖c6 (40 ♖d7!? ♖xc3 41 ♖g4 ♔h8 is not convincing either) 40...♖c2 (40...♖a3!?) 41 c4 ♖cc3 42 ♖g4 g5.

Is there a win here? If there is, it can perhaps only be established in correspondence play – the problem has become purely analytical, and everything hangs by a hair. After 43 b5 ♖f2 44 ♖e4! ♖ff3 (44...h5 45 ♖xe5) 45 ♖xe5!? or 45 ♔g4!?,



W

White seems to win. The same result is reached after 43...Nfe3 44 c5 e4 (44...Ne2 45 Na4!) 45 b6 Ne2 46 b7 Ncc2 47 Nxcg5. However, there is still 43...Nf5!? 44 c5 h5 45 Na4 Nf7! to consider. Then if 46 b6?!, Black has 46...Nc2! (threatening 47...g4+ 48 Qh4 Ng7) 47 Na7 Nxa7 48 bxa7 Na2. The play can surely be improved for both sides, but all this is too complicated and unclear.

We can now see why it was so important to arrive at the right evaluation of the position before White's 29 g3. In an over-the-board game, a player with such a big advantage would hardly have any reason to go in for complications whose outcome he could not predict, however hard he tried.

Sanakoev's play was wholly true to his style – he usually favours a tactical solution to his

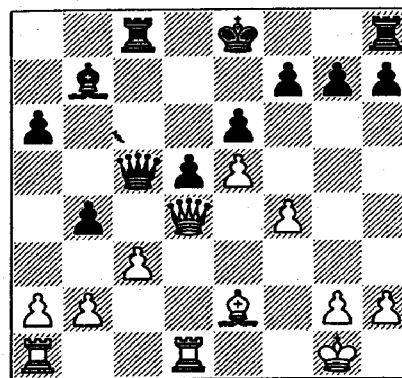
problems. The question of chess styles is very important and deserves a few remarks, however brief.

Logically, it is clear that if a continuation – whether positional or tactical in nature – is indisputably strongest, it ought to be selected by a player irrespective of his style. If it is not selected, then we are no longer talking about style but about a limitation in his manner of play. Style comes to the fore, above all, in a situation where there is a choice between possibilities of roughly equal worth (particularly a choice of opening strategies). Of course, this is just a rough outline – in actual fact everything is much more complex. There are very many controversial borderline situations, and anyway decisions are sometimes taken on psychological grounds. There is nothing wrong with that.

"An experienced chess player will sometimes opt for a particular continuation without being at all convinced that it is the best of all those available; he merely judges that it gives the most chances in practice" (Benjamin Blumenfeld). You may consciously select a line which you know is not strongest, just so as to give the game a character that suits you and is unwelcome to your opponent. The question here is merely how far

this psychological approach can legitimately go, where the line should be drawn.

An analysis of concrete examples to trace how a player's style influences his decisions would be very interesting and useful. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, no one has yet carried out such an investigation. Some speculative attempts have been made to establish a classification of styles, but that is all.



W

Sanakoev – Ljungdahl
6th World Championship
1968-71

White stands better, of course. The only question is how he can extract the maximum from the position.

"After 18 cxb4?! Qxd4+ 19 Nxd4 Nc2 20 Qd3 Nxb2 21 Nc1 Qd7 22 Nc2 Nxc2 23 Qxc2 White

would forfeit most of his advantage" (Sanakoev).

Let us try to refine this variation by playing first 18 Qxc5 Nxc5, and only then 19 cxb4 Nc2 20 Qf2 (20 Qd3 Nxb2 21 Ndb1 Nd2), when after 20...Nxb2 21 Ndb1 Nxb1 22 Nxb1 Qd7 23 Nc1 White has, this time, occupied the c-file and moved his king nearer the centre; his advantage is quite substantial. However, Black can improve his defence by sacrificing a pawn with 20...Qe7!, so as to retain control of the open file and White's second rank. For example, 21 Ndc1! Nhc8 22 Nxc2 Nxc2 23 b3 d4! 24 Nd1 Nxa2 (now we understand why the black king didn't go to d7) 25 Nxd4 Qxg2.

A dangerous plan was suggested by Grandmaster Stefan Kindermann, also starting 18 Qxc5 Nxc5, but then deviating with 19 Nac1!? bxc3 20 b4! Nc7 21 Nd3:

a) In the bishop endgame that arises from 21...Qd7 22 Ndx3 Nhc8 23 Nxc7+ Nxc7 24 Nxc7+ Qxc7, Black has a difficult defence ahead of him. His only hope, 25...Qb6 (followed by 26...Qc6 or 26...a5), is easily dashed by 25 a4! and then a5 and Qf2-e3-d4-c5. The pawn ending after 25...Qc6 26 a5 Qb5 27 Qxb5 axb5 28 Qf2 is lost for Black (as readers may verify for themselves).

b) Black does better to refrain from the rook exchange and play 21...d4!? 22 ♖xd4 ♔e7. It is then unclear how significant White's advantage is.

18 ♖ab1!!

A 'mysterious rook move', to use Nimzowitsch's phrase. Sanakoev writes, "*Such a continuation is more difficult to find than a forced combination involving several piece sacrifices.*" He is right, although it seems to me that the main difficulty lies not in finding White's move but in assessing its consequences.

18 ... ♗xd4+

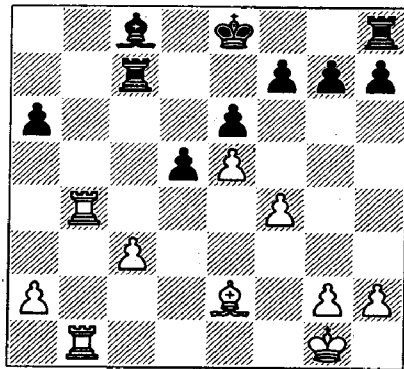
18...bxc3 19 bxc3 ♗xd4+ is less precise, because White can choose between 20 ♖xd4 (as in the game) and 20 cxd4. Black cannot avoid opening the b-file; 18...a5? is entirely bad: 19 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 20 cxb4 axb4 21 ♖d4!? or 21 ♖bc1!.

19 ♖xd4 bxc3

20 bxc3 ♖c7

21 ♖db4 ♕c8 (D)

On arriving at this position in his analysis, an over-the-board player would most probably cut short his calculations and reject the plan beginning with 18 ♖ab1 (this is what Zviagintsev did). Indeed, what has White achieved? He has seized the b-file, but there is nothing there to attack. White's queenside pawns have been weakened,



W

which promises Black real counter-chances even in the (highly likely) event of his losing the a6-pawn. No, Sanakoev's decision does not look convincing – it is somehow strategically suspect!

This verdict can be amended if only we continue our study of the position and discover White's plan here. In itself, the plan is nothing unexpected; Nimzowitsch, after all, stressed that "*breaking into the opponent's camp, usually on the seventh or eighth rank, is the logical culmination of effective manoeuvring in an open file*". However, it is quite impossible to see in advance how dangerous the doubling of rooks on the eighth rank will be. For that, we need a detailed analysis, which is not easy to perform even in a postal game. Playing over-the-board with limited thinking time, it is not worth even trying

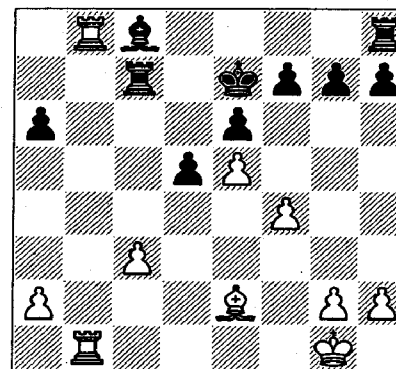
to work out the variations accurately. You have to put your faith in your intuition. It is interesting to see what it tells you here.

22 ♖b8!

Why doesn't White defend his c3-pawn? Surely because he wants to give his opponent no time for the following deployment of his forces: 22 ♖b3 ♔e7 23 ♖b8 (23 ♔f2 is better) 23...♖d8 24 ♖a8 d4!.

The tempting 22 c4 would work in the case of 22...dxc4 23 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 24 ♕xc4 ♔d7 25 ♖b8 ♖d8 26 ♖a8 ♕b7 27 ♖a7 and 28 ♕xa6. However, exchanging on c4 is not obligatory; Black has the stronger 22...♔e7! 23 cxd5 exd5.

22 ... ♔e7 (D)



W

23 ♖a8!

Sanakoev consistently pursues his plan. After 23 ♕xa6?! ♖d8 (or 23...♖e8) he would either have to

settle for an exchange of bishops that favours his opponent, or else give up the c-pawn.

23 ... ♖e8

Let us look at 23...♖xc3:

a) The obvious reply is 24 ♕xa6, but after 24...♖e8 25 ♖a7+ (25 ♖bb8 ♕d7) 25...♔f8 26 ♕b5 (26 ♕xc8 ♖exc8 27 ♖bb7 ♔g8! 28 ♖xf7 ♖c1+ 29 ♔f2 ♖lc2+ 30 ♔g3?! ♖8c3+ 31 ♔h4 ♖xg2 gives White nothing) 26...♖d8 the position is not entirely clear. Black's pieces are tied down as before (his bishop doesn't have a single move), but the advance of his d-pawn, and a kingside break with ...g5 where suitable, promise him distinct counter-chances.

b) A stronger line is 24 ♖a7+! ♔d8 (24...♕d7 25 ♖bb7 ♖d8 26 ♕xa6 ♔e8 27 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 28 ♕b5) 25 ♖b8! (25 ♖xf7? ♖c7) 25...♖c7 26 ♖aa8 (threatening a permanent pin on the eighth rank after 27 ♕xa6) 26...a5 27 ♖xa5 and then 27...♖b7 28 ♖ba8 or 27...♖c1+ 28 ♔f2 ♖c2 29 ♔e1 (not 29 ♖aa8? ♔c7 30 ♔e1 ♖xe2+ 31 ♔xe2 ♕a6+) 29...♔c7 (the threat was 30 ♖a7 or 30 ♖aa8 followed by 31 ♕a6) 30 ♖b3 and 31 ♖a7+. It would seem that in this variation Black *cannot* break free.

24 ♖b3 ♖6

If 24...♕d7, then 25 ♖xa6 ♖ec8 26 ♖aa3. This is stronger than 25

$\text{fxe8+ } \text{axe8}$ (25... axe8) 26 axa6 a7 27 bb6 c7 , when 28 bb7 fails to 28... xb7 29 xb7 b5 ! followed by ... d7-c7 .

25 ad3 !

Not at once 25 cf2? fxe5 26 fxe5 ff8+ 27 ce3 ff5 .

25 ... fxe5

26 fxe5 h6

27 cf2

By now White's advantage is beyond dispute; he went on to exploit it convincingly:

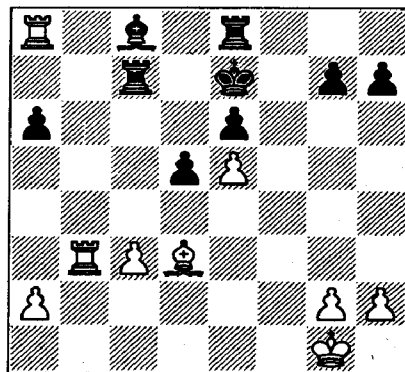
27... cc5 28 ce3 dd8 29 cd4 aa5 (29... cc7 30 bb8) 30 bb8 cd7 31 aa7+ cc6 32 axa6 aa4+ 33 ce3 (33 cd3? axa6+ 34 axa6+ axa6 35 xd8 xa2) 33... d4+ 34 cxd4 aa3+ 35 ce4 axa6 36 axa6+! axa6 37 xd8 xa2 38 dd6+ cb5 39 xe6 xxg2 40 cd5 1-0

Black went under without a fight. What became of our impression that he could hope for counterplay, that White's decision was 'strategically suspect'? Were those really just empty words?

They were not; we were basing our evaluations on objective factors in the position, and were therefore right to suppose that Black had far more stubborn ways to defend himself. Here are some considerations to make the search for a defensive plan easier. First, Black should not be afraid of losing the

a-pawn, especially if the bishops are exchanged in the process. Secondly, it is important to hinder the white king's advance to the centre of the board.

Let us return to the position after 26 fxe5 (D):

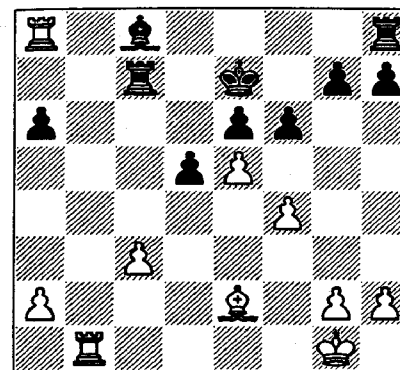


B

Instead of the colourless 26... h6 it was worth trying 26... ff8! ?, with a view to 27 axh7 d4 . After 27 h3 h6 (27... g6) 28 bb8 (28 axa6? axa6 29 axa6 ff5) 28... ff8 , Black can defend successfully. It is clear that White should, after all, prefer 27 $\text{axh7!?$ d4 28 c4! xc4 29 aa7+ cd8 30 h3 .

Zviagintsev suggested 23... ff6! ? (D) (instead of 23... ff8). Let me show you some variations we discovered together.

a) 24 bb8 ff8 25 axa6 ad7 26 fxe8+ axe8 , and if 27 ff8 , then 27... aa7 .



W

b) 24 bb3 fxe5 25 fxe5 ff8! . The rook restricts the mobility of the king, with the additional threat of 26... ff5 .

c) 24 axa6 ff8 , and now:

c1) 25 axc8 fxec8 26 fxc8 fxc8 27 bb7+ cf8 28 exf6 gxf6 29 fxh7 fxc3 , and Black retains genuine saving chances in the rook ending.

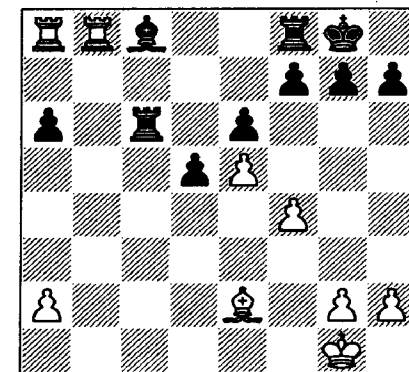
c2) The same goes for the variation 25 bb3 fxe5 26 fxe5 axa6 27 fxa6 fec8 28 bb6 fxc3 29 fxe6+ cf7 .

c3) 25 $\text{ad3!?$ fxe5 26 fxe5 ad7 (26... fxc3 27 aa7+ is dangerous for Black) 27 fxe8+ (it is also worth considering 27 aa3 fec8 28 bb3) 27... axe8 28 bb3 . White's advantage here is considerable, although the result of the struggle still remains unclear.

Another possible defensive approach (which, strictly speaking,

we ought to have considered first) involves taking the c3-pawn in some circumstances or other. Let us go back to the position after White's 22nd move.

In reply to 22...0-0!?, Sanakoev gives 23 aa8 , with the variation 23... ad7 24 bb8 xb8 (24... fcc8 25 fxc8 axc8 26 cf2!) 25 fxb8+ fxc8 , and now not 26 bb7? ab5! 27 axb5 axb5 28 fxb5 h5 29 bb3 fc4 30 g3 aa4 with counterplay, but simply 26 fxc8+! axc8 27 cf2 , and the penetration of the white king decides the game. However, Black can play 23... $\text{fxc3!?$ 24 bb8 fc6 (D).



W

How do we assess this position? Black keeps his extra pawn and is in no immediate danger, but his forces are completely tied down. The attempt to untangle with ... ff8 (aiming for ... cf8 and ... ad7) fails

against ♖xa6. Black must play ...g6 and ...♔g7, and then be content with waiting tactics. The question (to which I have yet to find a clear answer) is whether White's resources are adequate to breach his opponent's defence.

However, a general point is that once Black has castled, White is not obliged to sacrifice his c-pawn; he can keep the advantage with 23 ♖b3!?. It therefore makes sense for Black to take the pawn a move earlier.

Let us look at 22...♖xc3!?. The reply 23 ♖xa6 seems obvious, on the grounds that after 23...♔d7 24 ♖a8 ♖d8 25 ♖bb8 the permanent pin on the eighth rank will guarantee White a decisive plus. (He will bring his king to the centre and then advance his passed a-pawn.) If Black tries to untie himself with 23...♔e7 (with the idea of 24...♖e8 and 25...♔d7), he comes up against a tactical stroke pointed out by Yusupov: 24 ♖b7+!!, which wins a piece after 24...♔xb7 25 ♖xb7+ and 26 ♖b8+. However, Black has a saving line in 23...0-0!, and if 24 ♔b5 then 24...♖a3, attacking the a2-pawn and preparing to bring his bishop out to a6.

23 ♖a8! is an improvement. We have already discussed the situations arising from 23...♔d7 24 ♖xa6 ♖d8 25 ♖bb8 and 23...♔e7

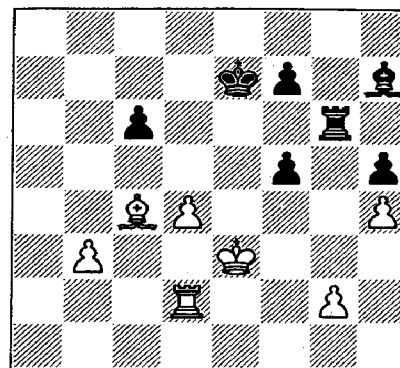
24 ♖a7+! – they are decidedly in White's favour. The best defence is 23...0-0! 24 ♖bb8 ♖c6. This brings us once again to the position in the last diagram. The objective verdict on White's whole idea starting with 18 ♖ab1 evidently depends on the assessment of that position.

Let us state our conclusions. The complicated (and surely not infallible) analysis we have just performed illustrates once again that even the most difficult-seeming positions may be viable. Nevertheless it does not cast doubt on the brilliant decision taken by Sanakoev on his 18th move. The defence, after all, is extremely hard, White always retains chances of success, and in any case we did not see anything more convincing for him.

Realizing an advantage

In examining the last two examples we have already broached this subject, which is of immense importance to every chess player. So is another which is closely linked to it – finding defensive resources in difficult positions.

Referring to the diagram overleaf, Sanakoev writes: "The critical position; essentially, it is the play from this position that makes the game notable. By means of a cunning regrouping, Black has set



W

Sanakoev – Engel
10th World Championship
1978-84

his opponent a concrete problem – what to do about the g- and h-pawns. The black bishop may be shut out for the time being, but will White's passed pawn on the queen-side outweigh his material losses on the kingside? After all, the black pieces may regain their activity with an eventual ...f4."

First let us see how the game ended (with notes based on Sanakoev's judgements and some of his variations).

42 d5! f4+!
43 ♔f2

On 43 ♔d4?! ♖g4! 44 ♔c5 cxd5 45 ♖xd5 ♖xh4 46 b4 ♖h1 Black retains good chances of saving the game.

43 ... cxd5

Not 43...c5 44 ♔d3 ♖h6 45 d6+! ♔d8 46 ♖xh7 with a won rook endgame.

44 ♖xd5 ♖g4
45 ♖f3! ♖xh4
46 ♔g1!

The point of White's play becomes clear – the rook is trapped.

46 ... ♔f5

46...♖g4 puts up more fight, although after 47 ♖xg4 hxg4 48 b4 f3 49 b5 ♔e4 50 b6 White should win all the same.

47 ♖d4

It is important to stop 47...♔g4.

47 ... ♔e6

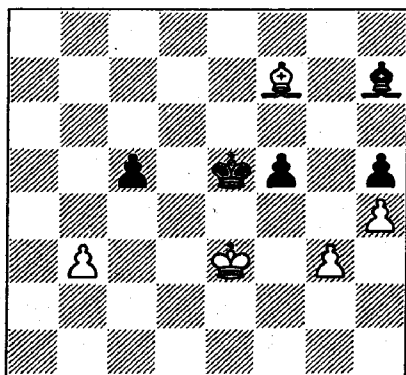
47...♔d7!? 48 b4 ♔e6 is a shade more accurate, but this too promises no saving chances. White continues 49 ♖d1! ♔b5 50 ♖d8 and 51 ♖b8.

48 b4 ♔e5
49 ♖d5+ ♔e6
50 b5 ♖g4
51 b6! ♖xf3
52 gxf3 1-0

Black resigned on account of 52...♔xd5 53 b7 ♖h3 54 b8 ♖xf3 55 ♖b7+, or 52...♖h3 53 ♖d8! (but not 53 b7? ♖g3+ 54 ♔h2 {or 54 ♔f2} 54...♖g8 followed by ...♖b8 and ...♔d6-c6).

Zviagintsev rejected 42 d5 due to the reply 42...c5!. He was doubtful about the bishop ending that arises from 43 d6+! (we will take Sanakoev's word for it when he

says that “after other moves Black is out of danger”, even though 43 ♖a2 deserves examination). Sanakoev analysed this endgame and considered it won. Here are his variations after 43...♙xd6 44 ♙xd6 ♙xd6 45 ♙xf7 ♙e5 46 g3 (D).



B

46...♙f6 47 ♙xh5 ♙g8 48 ♙d1 ♙e5 49 h5 and now:

a) 49...♙h7 50 ♙c2 ♙g8 51 h6 ♙h7 52 g4 f4+ 53 ♙d2 ♙xc2 54 ♙xc2.

b) 49...♙f7 50 h6 ♙f6 51 ♙f4 ♙g6 52 ♙h5+!

c) 49...♙e6 50 ♙c2 ♙f7 51 h6 ♙f6 52 ♙f4 ♙g6 (52...♙g8 53 ♙xf5 ♙xb3 54 g4 c4 55 g5+) 53 g4 ♙xh6 54 gxf5! ♙g8 55 f6 ♙f7 56 ♙e5 ♙g5 57 ♙f5 ♙xb3 58 ♙e6 and the f-pawn queens.

For all this, Vadim's intuition had not failed him. From the position in the last diagram, Black can

save himself with 46...f4+!! 47 gxf4+ ♙f6 48 ♙c4 (48 ♙xh5 ♙c2) 48...♙c2 (or 48...♙g6). As you can verify without difficulty, White is unable to exploit his extra pawn. He is hampered by having his b-pawn on a light square – the same colour as his bishop – and if his king comes over to c3, Black will have the chance to counter-attack on the other wing.

There is also a slightly different drawing line: 45...f4+! (in place of 45...♙e5) 46 ♙xf4 ♙e7 (alternatively, 46...♙c2 at once) 47 ♙xh5 (47 ♙c4 ♙f6) 47...♙c2.

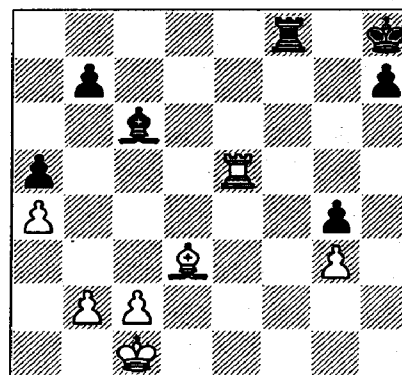
Zviagintsev chose another plan for realizing White's advantage, though he based it on the same idea – of trapping the black rook – which Sanakoev carried out in the actual game.

42 ♙f2! ♙g4 43 ♙e2 ♙xh4 44 ♙f3 ♙d6 (Black can't face losing the c-pawn) 45 b4! (intending 46 ♙d1 and 47 ♙g3; the immediate 45 ♙d1 is imprecise due to 45...c5!) 45...f4 (45...♙h1 46 ♙c2 ♙b1 47 ♙xc6+ ♙d7 48 ♙b6) 46 d5! (otherwise Black brings his bishop round to the defence) 46...cxd5 47 ♙xd5+ ♙c7 48 ♙b5! ♙g6, and only now, finally, 49 ♙g1! with good chances of victory.

I hope you are convinced by now that Sanakoev's book is rich

in content and offers us abundant food for thought. I have dwelt on a few episodes only (a further example of the author's play is examined in Chapter 13, 'Virtuoso Defence'), but of course there are many more games in the book, and in all of them the reader is sure to discover something interesting and useful.

Postscript: I would like to take the opportunity to make some corrections to some analysis of my own, published in *Technique for the Tournament Player* (Dvoretsky and Yusupov). This will involve us with the same problems as before: realizing an advantage, and looking for defensive resources in a difficult position.



W

Smirin – Vogt
Saltsjöbaden 1988/9

In the event of 33 ♙xa5? ♙f3 34 ♙h5 ♙xg3 35 ♙xh7+ ♙g8, Black's passed g-pawn ensures him adequate counter-chances. Ilia Smirin played 33 ♙e4?!, offering a bishop exchange, which looks like a perfectly sensible solution to the problem White faces.

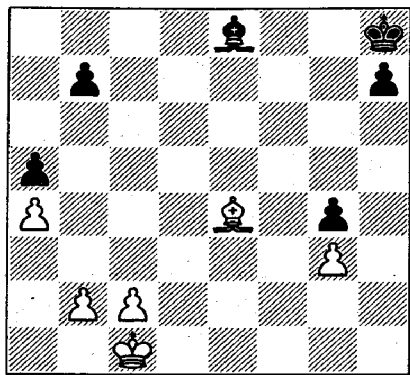
In the game, this decision paid off: 33...♙xa4? 34 ♙xa5 ♙e8 (or 34...♙c6 35 ♙xc6 bxc6 36 ♙g5) 35 ♙xb7 ♙f1+ 36 ♙d2 ♙g6 37 c4 ♙f2+ 38 ♙c3 ♙g7 39 ♙g5!, and in this hopeless position Black lost on time.

How can the defence be improved? The general view is that, in such situations, going into a rook ending offers the best chances of salvation (everyone knows the saying 'all rook endings are drawn'). Yet after 33...♙xe4 34 ♙xe4 ♙g8? (34...h5? 35 ♙e5) 35 ♙d2!?, with the idea of ♙e3-f4, Black is condemned to total passivity and should definitely lose.

In rook endgames it is always essential to try to activate your rook. After 33...♙f1+ 34 ♙d2 one idea is 34...♙xe4!? 35 ♙xe4 ♙f2+ and then 36 ♙d3 ♙f3+ 37 ♙e3 ♙f2 38 b3 ♙g7, or 36 ♙d1 h5! 37 ♙e5 ♙h2 38 ♙xa5 ♙g7 (with ...♙f6 and ...h4 to follow), Black obtains counterplay which is probably adequate to draw. Another possibility is 34...♙g1 35 ♙xc6 bxc6 36

♖xa5 ♖g2+ 37 ♔d3 ♖xg3+ 38 ♔e4 ♖g2 (but not 38...♖g1 39 ♖c5 g3 40 ♔f3 g2 41 b3!) 39 ♖c5 ♖f2! 40 a5 g3 41 a6 ♖f8 42 ♖g5 ♖a8 43 ♖xg3 ♖xa6.

Black may also exchange rooks and defend the seemingly difficult position with bishops of the same colour: 33...♖e8! 34 ♖xe8+ ♔xe8 (D).



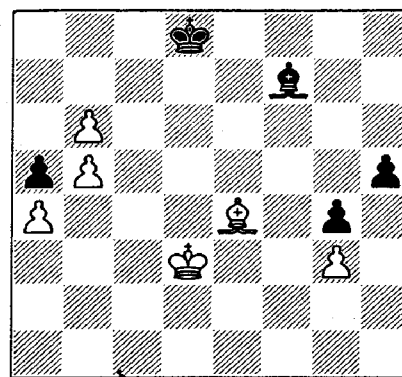
W

I confess I analysed this position carelessly. I did see that after 35 ♖xb7 ♖xa4 36 c4 Black avoids immediate defeat by means of 36...♖b3 37 c5 ♔g7 (and if 38 c6, then 38...♔d5! 39 ♖a8 ♔e6!). However, I was either relying on 38 ♖c8, and underestimating the pawn sacrifice 38...♔f6! 39 ♖xg4 ♔e5 – or else I didn't notice that after 38 ♔d2 ♔f6 39 ♔c3 Black has 39...♔d1! with the idea of ...♔f3. Igor Zaitsev rightly pointed

out my error (in 64 – *Chess Review* No. 12, 1996). Indeed I have not managed to find a win here. In the last variation, for example, White might try 40 c6 ♔f3 41 ♔c4 h5 42 ♔a8 ♔e7 43 ♔b5, counting on 43...♔d6(d8)? 44 ♔b6 h4 45 c7 or 43...h4 44 gxf4 g3? 45 c7(+)! (now we see why the king avoided the squares d4 and c5 – after 45...g2 the black pawn will not queen with check). Yet after 43...h4! 44 gxf4, Black first plays 44...♔d6! – forcing the white king to b6, where it is exposed to check – and only then 45...g3.

Instead, the grandmaster proposed an ingenious breakthrough plan: 35 b4!? b6 (Black loses at once with 35...axb4? 36 a5, or 35...♖xa4? 36 bxa5 followed by 37 ♖xb7) 36 b5 ♔f7! (Black has to hold up White's main threat of c4-c5) 37 ♔d2 ♔g7 38 ♔d3. At this point the only continuation Zaitsev gives is 38...h6 39 c4 ♔f6 40 c5 ♔e5 41 cxb6 ♔d6 42 ♔e3 ♖b3 43 ♖c6 ♖xa4 44 b7 ♔c7 45 b6+ ♔b8 46 ♖xa4. Here, though, I disagree with him – Black's resources are not yet exhausted. Quite apart from the plausible try 38...♔f6, sacrificing the h-pawn to bring his king to the queenside and hinder White's c4-c5, Black can play more accurately within the terms of the plan Zaitsev examines.

38...h5 39 c4 ♔f6 40 c5 ♔e7! (but on no account 40...♔e5? – the king's place is not in the centre but in front of the white pawns) 41 cxb6 ♔d8! (D)



W

How is White to win now? He doesn't succeed in queening a pawn with 42 ♔f5 ♖b3 43 ♔d4 ♖xa4 44 ♔c5 ♔d1 45 ♔d6 ♔f3 – the bishop arrives in the nick of time. Moreover, the position after 42 ♔e3 ♖b3 (42...♔c8) 43 ♖c6 ♔c8 44 b7+ ♔b8 45 b6 ♔d1 is drawn.

It turns out that Black has more than one way of saving himself. This casts doubt on the plan beginning with 33 ♔e4, and compels us to look for other ideas.

The strongest line was suggested by Grandmaster Viktor Bo-logan.

33 ♖g5!

The most important thing is to forestall 33...♖f3.

33 ... ♖xa4

34 ♖xa5!

An unexpected switch of fronts – Smirin only considered 34 ♖xg4 ♔c6, with a probable draw.

34 ... ♔c6

A tougher defence appears to be 34...♔e8, trying to get in ...h5 at the first convenient moment.

35 ♖g5!

This rook is like a bothersome fly.

35 ... ♔f3

35...♖g8 36 ♖h5.

36 ♖h5 ♖f7

37 ♔d2

Having skilfully tied down his opponent's pieces, White simply intends to strengthen his position by advancing his queenside pawns. This kind of plan for realizing an advantage (domination with no counterplay for the opponent) is wholly in the style of Anatoly Karpov. For an over-the-board player, a very important point is that hardly anything has to be calculated here (in contrast to the line with 33 ♔e4, where we had to immerse ourselves in both the bishop ending and the rook ending). This means there is far less likelihood of errors, such as those committed by Zaitsev and me in our analysis of the bishop ending.

Incidentally, in concluding that there is only one solution, we are wholly concurring with Zaitsev's views. "Many years of experience in chess analysis have convinced me that in tense positions balanced on a knife-edge, there cannot be

two paths to victory", he once wrote. Another experienced analyst, Gavriil Veresov, expressed the same thought: "In positions close to the borderline between a draw and defeat, we generally encounter a unique solution."

9 Missed Brilliancy Prizes

Artur Yusupov

Mark Dvoretsky's suggestion that I should write about some spoilt 'masterpieces' could not have been more to the point.

In the first place, there are some old games that I have wanted to analyse closely for a long time. With the passing of time the annoyance at missing the wins has subsided, and perhaps I can now look at these games more objectively and critically.

Secondly, I actually happen to be a leading expert in this field (I mean an expert in spoiling masterpieces, rather than in critically examining my own games). In the course of my career I have succeeded in creating some games which I can be proud of even now – they have stood up to the strict test of time and analysis. Yet for every such game there are ten others which were played beautifully up to a point, then hopelessly ruined.

Thirdly, I can imagine what 'pleasure' it will give my coach and collaborator (my collaborator in writing this book, that is – not in

ruining masterpieces) to observe my numerous blunders. At any rate, I can now explain them by saying that I was collecting them to put in a book.

I have a self-interested motive too. I am afraid that some tournament organizers (not without a certain justification, alas!) may have formed an unfavourable impression of my chess style. They may consider my play too solid and boring (unfortunately there is more truth in the latter). I want to turn this image into a positive one: "He plays badly but interestingly."

And finally, my woeful experiences may prove useful to others, although I have to admit that I personally have learned little even from my own mistakes.

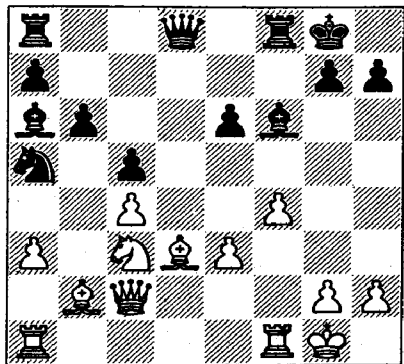
Yusupov – Rebel 8

*'Action Chess' (30 min. per game)
match (13), Ischia 1997*

Queen's Pawn Game

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 d4 e6 3 e3 c5 4 ♗d3
b6 5 b3 ♗e7 6 ♗b2 0-0 7 0-0 d5 8

♖e5 ♜fd7 9 f4 ♜xe5 10 dxe5
 ♙a6 11 c4 ♜c6 12 a3 dxc4 13
 bxc4 f5 14 exf6 ♙xf6 15 ♜c3
 ♜a5 16 ♞c2 (D)



B

My most recent example of a misplayed attack occurred in a demonstration match against a computer program. In this position Black took a decision typical of a computer:

16 ... ♜xc4

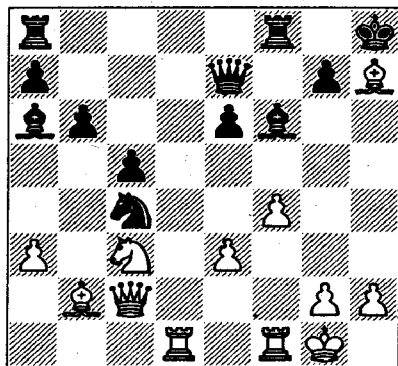
After the 'human' continuation 16...h6 17 ♙ad1 ♞e7 18 ♜b5 ♙xb2 19 ♞xb2, White would gain a clear plus, since Black's castled position would be weakened and his knight would be out of play on a5. Now, however, White has to calculate some variations that would prove a difficult task for me even with a normal time-limit.

17 ♙xh7+ ♜h8
 18 ♙ad1

This natural move cost me ten precious minutes and turned out to be an outright error. The immediate 18 ♙f3! was better. I was afraid of 18...♞d2 – for no good reason, since the simple 19 ♞xd2 ♜xd2 20 ♙h3 is adequate. If instead 18...♜xb2 19 ♙h3 ♙h4 (alternatively 19...♜c4 20 ♞e2) 20 ♙e4 ♙d3 21 ♞xb2 ♙xe4 22 ♜xe4 ♜g8 23 ♞e5, White has a fierce attack.

18 ... ♞e7? (D)

The correct reply was 18...♜xe3!. If 19 ♙xd8, then 19...♙axd8 is not bad: 20 ♞g6 ♙d3 21 ♞xd3 ♙xd3 22 ♙xd3 ♙d4!?, while 19...♜xc2! 20 ♙xa8 ♙xa8 21 ♙xc2 ♙d4+ 22 ♙f2 ♙d8! is an even stronger line. I had of course overlooked the last move of this variation.

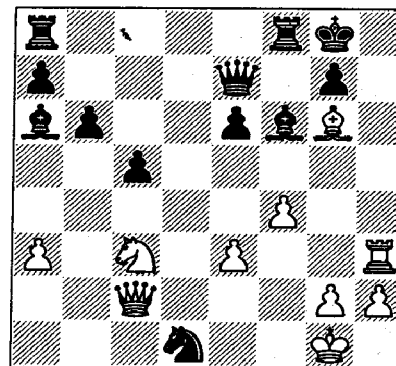


W

19 ♙f3 ♜xb2
 20 ♙h3 ♜xd1

If a computer sees the chance to devour something without detecting a concrete reason not to, it will do so without fail. A human player knows that gluttony leads to no good, but the concrete proof of this principle lies beyond the computer's horizon. However, being in time-trouble, White failed to find the win and settled for a repetition of moves. The correct line was discovered the following day by some chess enthusiasts who were interested in analysing White's attack.

21 ♙g6+ ♜g8 (D)



W

I was intending to bring the queen into the attack with 22 ♞xd1!, but was somewhat discouraged when I noticed the defence 22...♙g5!. I did realize that White's attacking resources were not exhausted, and that I had 23 ♜d5!. On 23...♞d8, however, what escaped me was the

intermediate check 24 ♙h7+!, followed after 24...♜h8 (24...♜f7 25 ♞h5+) by 25 fxg5:

a) 25...♞xg5 26 ♙g6+ ♜g8 (26...♞h6 27 ♙xh6+ gxh6 28 ♞a1+!) 27 ♜e7+! ♞xe7 28 ♙h8+ ♜xh8 29 ♞h5+ ♜g8 30 ♞h7#.

b) 25...♙f1+ 26 ♞xf1 ♙xf1 27 ♙f5+ ♜g8 28 ♙xe6+ ♜f8 29 ♙h8#.

I don't know which of these mates is prettier, but it's a pity I didn't manage to end the game fittingly with one or the other. Instead, there followed:

22 ♙h7+ ♜h8

23 ♙g6+ ♜g8

1/2-1/2

Yusupov – Xie Jun

Linares 1997

Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙xc6 dxc6 5 0-0 ♞d6 6 ♜a3 b5 7 c3 c5 8 ♜c2 f6?! (8...♜e7; 8...♙b7) 9 a4 ♙b7 10 axb5 ♙xe4 11 d4 cxd4 (D)

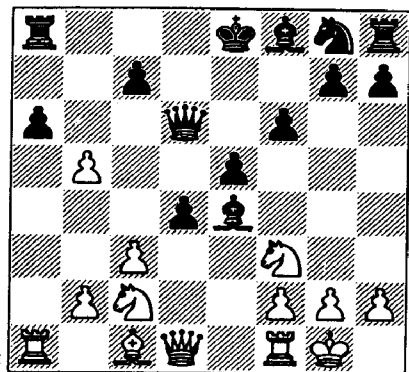
Black is behind in development and White has attacking chances. Such trivialities as the loss of a pawn should not, of course, worry him.

12 ♙e1! ♙b7

13 cxd4 axb5

14 ♙xa8+ ♙xa8

15 ♞e2 e4



W

16 ♖xb5+ ♘c6
17 ♖a5

White has already won his pawn back and continues to develop his initiative. 17 ♖xe4+?! is weaker in view of 17...♔f7.

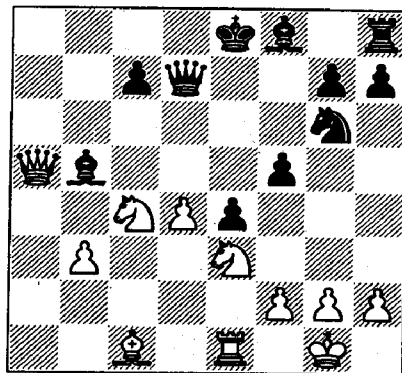
17 ... ♘e7
18 ♘d2 f5
19 b3!

A good move, setting up the threat of ♘a3 and preparing to transfer a knight via c4 to the central square e5.

19 ... ♖d7
20 ♘c4! ♘g6
21 ♘2e3 ♘b5 (D)

In the event of the optimistic 21...f4, White had prepared the powerful rejoinder 22 ♘e5. Instead Black plays the natural and necessary move. After this her backward development assumes dangerous proportions, yet on the other hand her pawn centre should

not be underestimated! If she gets the chance to complete her development, it is White who will be badly off. I felt that the critical moment in the struggle had arrived, and immersed myself in the search for the best solution.



W

I now made an amusing mistake in analysis. I was very keen to dispatch my knight to e5, and quite quickly hit on the right method: 22 ♘xf5!! ♖xf5 23 ♘e5 – only to discard it, with much regret and just about as quickly, on account of the simple 23...♘xe5 24 ♖xb5+ ♘f3+. The fact that in this tempting variation Black's king is in check and her last move is therefore strictly prohibited by the rules of chess, was of course the point I overlooked. The reason for such a curious error must lie in my indistinct image of the chessboard while I

was analysing; a vital detail of the position was simply excluded from my internal field of vision.

I believe the knight sacrifice would have won. On 23...c6, White has a pretty mate with 24 ♖a8+ ♔e7 25 ♘g5+! ♖xg5 26 ♖b7+ ♔e6 27 ♖d7+. A stiffer defence is 23...♘d7, but White still has a decisive attack after 24 ♖a8+ ♘c8 25 ♖xe4 ♘e7 26 ♘a3.

It was also worth considering 22 h4!?, which virtually forces the reply 22...h5. Then White has the same sacrifice: 23 ♘xf5! ♖xf5 24 ♘e5 ♘d7 25 ♖a8+, although in this case Black may get the chance to bring her rook into play via h6.

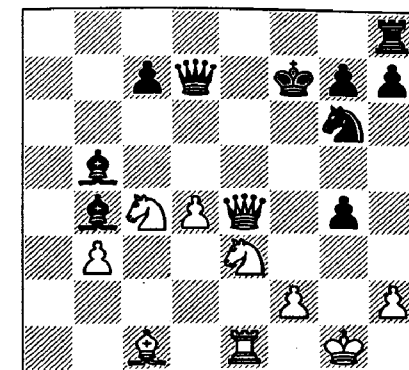
Thomas Wedberg suggested an alternative knight move: 22 ♘e5!. According to his analysis, after 22...♘xe5 23 dxe5 c6 (23...♘d3? 24 ♘d5!; 23...♘c5 24 ♖a8+ ♖d8 25 ♖b7 with advantage) 24 ♖d1 ♘d3 25 ♘a3 ♘xa3 (25...f4 is bad because of 26 ♘c4 ♖g4 27 ♖a1 ♘xc4 28 ♘xf8 ♖xf8 29 ♖c7 ♘a6 30 e6!) 26 ♖a8+ ♖d8 27 ♖xa3 ♖f8 28 ♖c5, White maintains an advantage.

Straying from the correct line of attack, I was tempted to undermine the centre in a way that appears strategically attractive.

22 g4?

This move looks stronger than it actually is.

22 ... fxc4
23 ♖a8+ ♔f7
24 ♖xe4 ♘b4! (D)



W

Black makes use of the breathing space to finish her development at top speed. White wins a pawn, but his initiative evaporates completely.

25 ♖d1 ♖e8
26 ♖xg4 ♖xg4+

Assessing the position correctly. In the endgame Black's king will be safe, and her strong bishops will fully compensate for the slight loss of material.

27 ♘xg4 ♖e4
28 h3 h5
29 ♘ge5+ ♘xe5
30 ♘xe5+ ♔e6

We can now take stock of the situation. Black has obtained sufficient compensation for the pawn. In view of his scattered position,

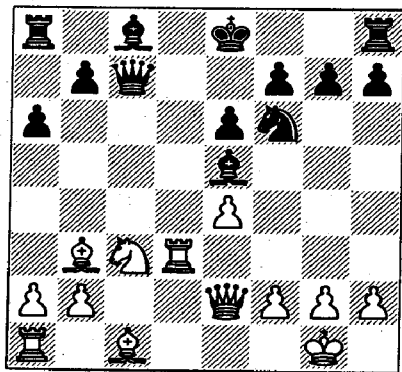
White has no real chance to do more than share the point – which indeed is what occurred a little later.

Yusupov – Ivanchuk
Tal Memorial Tournament,
Riga 1995
 Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 d5 2 Δ f3 e6 3 c4 dxc4 4 e3 a6
 5 Δ xc4 c5 6 Δ b3 Δ f6 7 0-0 Δ c6 8
 Ψ e2 cxd4 9 Δ d1 d3 (9... Δ e7) 10
 Δ xd3 Ψ c7 11 Δ c3 Δ d6?!

11... Δ c5 may be better.

12 e4 Δ e5
 13 Δ xe5 Δ xe5 (D)

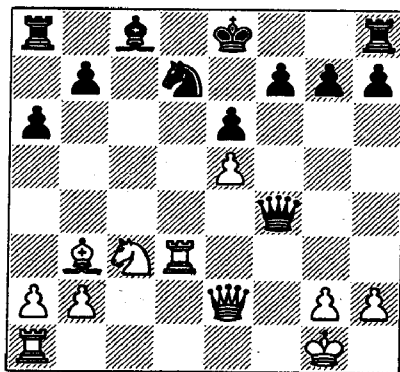


W

The right way! By sacrificing a pawn I increase my lead in development still more. The slow 14 g3 would allow Black to obtain a fully acceptable position after 14... Δ d7 15 f4 Δ xc3 16 Δ xc3 Δ c6, e.g.: 17 e5 Δ d5 18 Δ xd5 exd5 19 Δ e3 d4 20 Δ xd4 Ψ d7 with counterplay.

14 ... Δ xf4
 15 Δ xf4 Ψ xf4
 16 e5! Δ d7 (D)

The point of the pawn sacrifice is that the active 16... Δ g4? is met by the simple 17 g3, and if then 17... Ψ f5 White has either 18 Δ c2 or 18 Δ f1, when his attack proceeds unopposed.



W

17 Δ f1!

Again White adopts the most energetic solution. Of course, he could have maintained the attack without additional sacrifices: 17 Δ e3!? 0-0 18 Δ f1 Ψ d4 19 Δ h1. In

that case, however, the active black queen in the middle of the board would have been a serious hindrance to White's offensive. After the move played, White drives the queen out of the centre; the loss of the e5-pawn is compensated for by the gain of time and the opening of lines.

Instead 17 Δ ad1 would be a cardinal error, allowing Black to bail out with a small sacrifice and beat off the attack: 17...0-0! 18 Δ xd7 Δ xd7 19 Δ xd7 Δ ad8.

17 ... Ψ xe5
 18 Δ e3 Ψ d4

Naturally, 18... Ψ c5 is weaker because of 19 Δ e4. Pinning the rook is Black's best chance. He would lose at once with 18... Ψ d6? (18... Ψ c7 is answered by the same stroke) 19 Δ xf7 Δ xf7 20 Δ xe6 Ψ d4+ 21 Δ h1 Δ c5 22 Ψ f3+.

19 Δ d1 Ψ a7

Not 19... Ψ b6 on account of 20 Δ a4.

20 Δ e4 0-0
 21 Δ h1

White is doing everything right but expending too much effort and time on it. The only reason why I couldn't conduct the game to its logical conclusion was that I didn't trust my judgement and was trying to calculate the variations more or less exhaustively. The result was that at the critical stage I simply

didn't have enough thinking time. I ought to have had more faith in my own powers, but just try maintaining your confidence and *sang-froid* when one of the world's strongest players is sitting opposite you, quickly answering your moves with an imperturbable air!

21 ... Δ e5

In answer to 21... Δ d8, Ljubomir Ftačnik suggested 22 Δ f6+! gxf6 (22... Δ h8 23 Ψ h5 h6 24 Δ g4) 23 Ψ g4+ Δ f8 (23... Δ h8 24 Δ g3) 24 Ψ b4+, and if 24... Ψ c5 (but not 24... Δ e8 25 Δ g3), the simple 25 Ψ xc5+ Δ xc5 26 Δ xd8+ Δ e7 27 Δ h8 gives White a large plus in the ending.

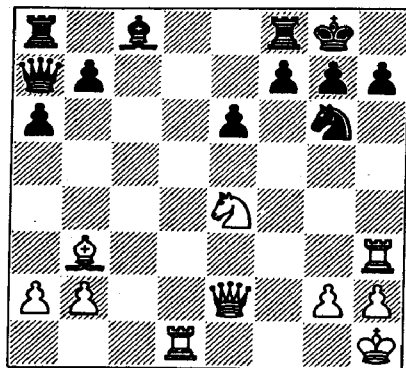
22 Δ h3 Δ g6 (D)

22...h6 would be weaker in view of 23 Δ xh6 gxh6 24 Δ f6+, shattering Black's castled position. Black brings the knight closer to his king, but White has already concentrated nearly all his forces for the attack.

23 Ψ h5

White seeks a rational continuation suited to his limited time for calculation. He could already have launched the decisive onslaught with 23 Δ xh7!?. According to Sergei Dolmatov's analysis, Black loses if he accepts the sacrifice at once:

a) 23... Δ xh7 24 Ψ h5+ Δ g8 25 Δ g5 Δ e8 26 Δ f1 and now:



W

23 ... h6

At this moment I only had five minutes left on the clock. I saw that my planned combination guaranteed perpetual check, and hoped for the best.

24 ♖f6+?

Directly after the game, much to my annoyance, I easily found a decisive strengthening of the attack. I should have brought my bishop into the fight with 24 ♖c2!, after which it turns out that Black is helpless against the threat of 25 ♖f6+. He only has the unpleasant choice between:

a) 24...e5 25 ♖f6+ ♕h8 (or 25...gxf6 26 ♖g3 f5 27 ♖xg6+ fxc6 28 ♖xg6+ ♕h8 29 ♖xh6+ ♕g8 30 ♖b3+) 26 ♖g3 and now:

a1) 26...♖e6 27 ♖xg6 fxc6 28 ♖xg6 ♖g8 29 ♖xg8 (29 ♖d7!) 29...♕xg8 30 ♖h7+ ♕f7 31 ♖b3+ ♕f6 32 ♖f1+.

a2) 26...e4 27 ♖xe4 (27 ♖xg6 fxc6 28 ♖xg6 ♖f5!) 27...♖f4 28 ♖xf7 ♖g4 29 ♖e7.

a3) 26...♖f4 27 ♖xe5 ♖g6 28 ♖xg6 fxc6 29 ♖xg6 b5 30 ♖xh6+ gxc6 31 ♖d7.

b) 24...b6 25 ♖f6+ gxf6 (or 25...♕h8 26 ♖g5) 26 ♖xh6 ♖e8 27 ♖xg6.

c) 24...♖f4 25 ♖f6+ ♕h8 26 ♖xf7! ♖d7 27 ♖xh6+.

In all these variations the black king is unable to escape a quick

mate. My premature combination, by contrast, allows Ivanchuk to maintain the balance.

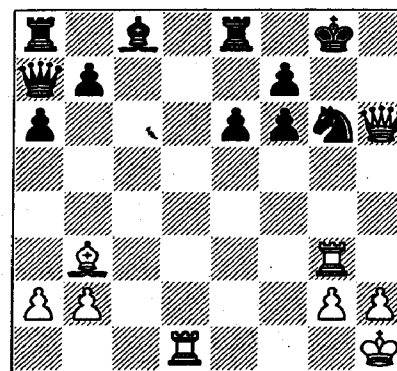
24 ... gxf6

24...♕h8? would lose to 25 ♖g5! e5 26 ♖xh6+ gxc6 27 ♖xh6#.

25 ♖xh6 ♖e8

26 ♖g3 (D)

Here Black can answer 26 ♖c2 with 26...f5, leading to perpetual check after 27 ♖h7+ ♕f8 28 ♖h6+.



B

26 ... ♖f2!

By an irony of fate it is Black's queen that intervenes to save him. (We recall White's exertions to shut this key piece out of the game.) Black might try playing for a win, banking on his opponent's time-trouble, but the attempt would most likely boomerang. Thus, 26...b6 27 ♖d4! ♖c7 28 ♖dg4 is no good at all for Black. If 26...b5,

then after 27 ♖f1! ♖d4 28 ♖xg6+ fxc6 29 ♖xg6+ ♕f8 30 ♖h6+ White can force perpetual check at will, as 30...♕e7 fails to 31 ♖g7+ ♕d8 32 ♖d1.

Now that Black has countered the threat of h2-h4, White has nothing better than to settle for a draw.

27 ♖xg6+	fxg6
28 ♖xg6+	♕f8
29 ♖h6+	♕f7
30 ♖h7+	♕f8
31 ♖h8+	1/2-1/2

Yusupov – Hübner
Tilburg 1987
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 ♖f3 ♖f6 3 c4 dxc4 4 ♖c3 c6 5 a4 ♖f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♖xc4 ♖b4 8 0-0 ♖bd7 9 ♖h4 ♖g6 10 ♖xg6 hxc6 11 f4

11 h3.

11...♖d5

11...♖a5.

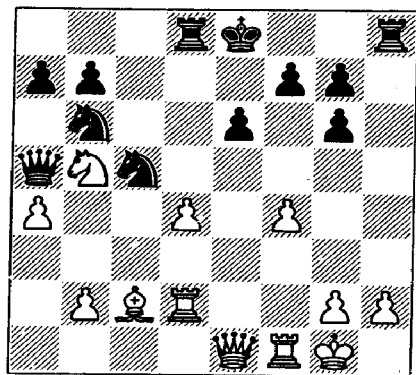
12 ♖d2

12 ♖e4!?

12...♖a5 13 ♖e1 ♖5b6 14 ♖b3 c5 15 ♖d1 cxd4 16 ♖b5 ♖xd2 17 ♖xd2 ♖c5 18 ♖c2 ♖d8 19 exd4?! (D)

A more solid line is 19 ♖xd4 ♖xe1 20 ♖xe1, and if 20...♖xd4 21 exd4 ♖cxa4, then 22 d5.

White has rather overestimated his chances, and now the cool



B

19...0-0! might have set him some serious problems. Instead, Hübner falls in with my intentions.

19 ... ♖cxa4

20 ♗xg6

Virtually a forced move. Sharp play suddenly flares up.

20 ... ♖e7

Accepting the sacrifice would have lost: 20...fxg6 21 ♖xe6+ ♖f8 22 f5. A more circumspect line, however, was 20...0-0!? 21 ♗d3 a6, as the inviting 22 f5?! is met by the unpleasant 22...♗xb2! (stronger than 22...axb5 23 f6 or 22...exf5 23 ♗xf5).

21 ♗xf7

It is too late for White to stop half-way (21 ♗d3 is no good in view of 21...a6 22 f5 axb5 23 fxe6 f6 24 ♖g3 ♖xd2). Both players are caught up in the surging current and have no inkling where they will manage to surface.

21 ... ♗xf7

The consequences of 21...♖xb5 are unclear: 22 ♖xe6+ ♖f8 23 ♗g6 ♖d7 24 ♗e2 ♖xe6 25 ♗xe6 ♖d5 26 ♗fe1 ♖f6. I think that after 27 g3!? or 27 ♗e7 White would have enough compensation for the piece sacrifice.

22 f5 e5

The following defences are inadequate: 22...♗he8 23 fxe6+ ♖g8 24 e7, and 22...♖xb5 23 ♖xe6+ ♖f8 24 f6 ♖d7 (or 24...♖xf1+ 25 ♖xf1 ♗e8 26 ♖d6+ ♖f7 27 ♗f2), which fails to 25 fxg7+ ♖xg7 26 ♖f6+ ♖g8 27 ♖g6+.

23 f6

The immediate 23 ♖xe5 was a serious alternative. The following variations do not, of course, exhaust all the possibilities in the position, but they do show how strong White's attack is:

a) 23...♗he8 24 ♖d6+.

b) 23...♖xd2 24 f6! (24 ♖e6+ ♖f8 25 f6 ♗d7!) and now:

b1) 24...g5 25 ♖d6+! ♗xd6 (25...♖g6 26 ♖e4+ ♖h6 27 ♖f5+ ♖g6 28 f7) 26 ♖e7+ ♖g6 27 ♖g7+ ♖h5 28 ♖xh8+.

b2) 24...♖g8 25 fxg7 ♗h6 (or 25...♗xh2 26 ♖e6+ ♖h7 27 g8 ♖+ ♗xg8 28 ♗f7+ ♗g7 29 ♖f5+ ♖h8 30 ♗f8+ ♗g8 31 ♖f6+ ♖h7 32 ♗f7+) 26 ♖e7+ and White wins.

c) 23...♖d5 24 ♖e6+ ♖f8 25 f6 g6 26 ♗e2 and now:

c1) 26...♖xb5 27 f7 ♖xe2 (or 27...♖d7 28 ♖e5! ♗h7 29 ♖e8+) 28 ♖xe2 ♖ab6 29 ♖e5 with advantage.

c2) 26...♖b4 27 f7 ♖e7 28 ♖g4 ♖h4 (28...♖e3 is answered by 29 ♖xg6 or 29 ♖f4) 29 ♗e8+! ♗xe8 30 fxe8 ♖+ ♖xe8 31 ♖d6+ ♖d8 32 ♖c8+ ♖e7 33 ♗f7+ ♖xd6 34 ♖d7#.

c3) 26...♖b6 27 ♖g4 ♖f7 28 ♖g5! intending 29 ♗e7+.

The continuation I chose is probably just as good; in many lines it merely transposes.

23 ... g6

On 23...g5, White has either 24 dxe5 or 24 ♖xe5 with a powerful attack.

24 ♖xe5

An interesting alternative is 24 dxe5!? ♖xd2 25 e6+ ♖f8! 26 e7+ ♖f7 27 exd8 ♖+ ♖xd8 28 ♖b4! with threats of 29 ♖d6+ or 29 b3.

24 ... ♖d5

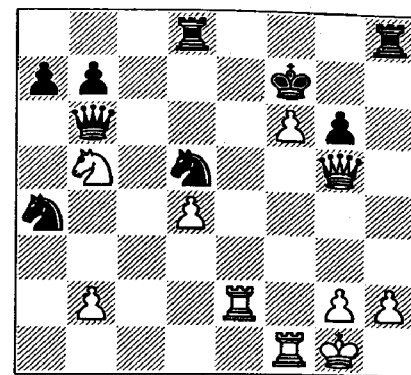
25 ♗e2 ♖b6

If 25...♖xb5, then 26 ♖e6+ ♖f8 27 f7 ♖xe2 28 ♖xe2 with advantage to White.

26 ♖g5! (D)

Short of time, White nonetheless finds new ways to augment his attack. The threat is 27 ♗e7+, for example: 26...♖xb5 27 ♗e7+ ♖f8 28 ♖xg6 ♖xf1+ 29 ♖xf1 ♖xe7 30 ♖g7+ and mates.

26 ... ♗d7



B

27 ♗e7+ ♖xe7

27...♗xe7 28 fxe7+ ♖f6 is no better, in view of 29 ♖e5 with the decisive threat of 30 ♖d6+.

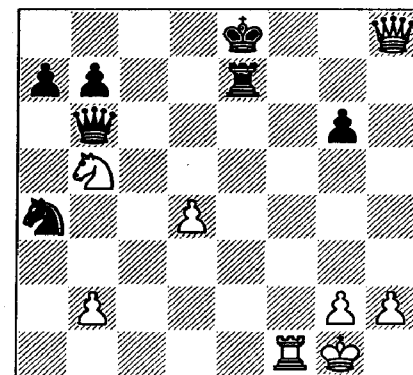
28 fxe7+ ♖e8

29 ♖e5

29 ♗f6 was probably an even stronger move.

29 ... ♗xe7

30 ♖xh8+ (D)



B

Playing this move in fairly bad time-trouble, I faint-heartedly offered a draw, which my opponent prudently accepted ($\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$). Imagine my astonishment in the post-mortem, when I realized I had an extra pawn in the final position! I had been material down for so many moves, and was so glad to have won it back, that I didn't even notice I had picked up a bonus! Of course White's sound extra pawn dictates the verdict on the position, and after the natural 30...♔d7 31 ♖h3+ ♕e6 32 ♖xe6+ ♖xe6 33 b3, even my technique should be adequate to win.

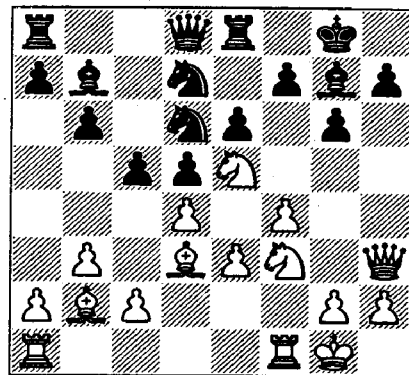
Yusupov – Anand

Linares 1991

Queen's Pawn Opening

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 e3 b6 4 ♙d3
 ♙b7 5 0-0 d5 6 ♘e5 ♘bd7 7 f4 g6
 8 b3 ♙g7 9 ♘d2 c5 10 ♙b2 0-0 11
 ♚f3! ♘e8 12 ♚h3 ♘d6 13 ♘df3
 ♚e8 (D)

Both sides have more or less completed their mobilization, and White resolutely goes into action. On the other hand Black is well prepared for his opponent's attack; he has constructed sturdy lines of defence. Possibly I should have preferred the restrained 14 ♖ad1!?, but already I was filled with a mood for enterprise.



W

14 ♖g5 ♗f8

15 dxc5

A standard exchange, opening the long diagonal for the bishop.

15 ... bxc5

16 Rad1!

Bringing his rook into the game and offering a piece sacrifice, White goes all out for sharp play. It was impossible to calculate all the variations, but it seemed to me that a couple of pawns plus the initiative should be adequate compensation.

16 ... f6 (D)

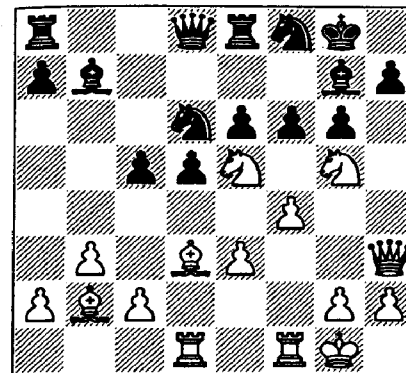
Anand accepts the challenge. The unassuming 16... is less in keeping with his temperament; he very rarely shirks complications.

17 ♖xh7! ♖xh7

18 xg6

18 ♖xg6 is weaker on account of the simple 18...♗f8.

18 ... ♔c7



W

18...♞c8 19 ♠f3 c4 is risky in view of 20 ♘e7+ ♚xe7 21 ♚xh7+ ♜f8 22 ♙g6 ♞ed8 23 ♞g3 or 23 ♙a3 with a strong attack. But perhaps Black should have gone in for 18...f5!? 19 ♙xg7 ♜xg7. Then 20 ♠f3 ♘f6 21 ♞g3 leads to a repetition of moves: 21...♘fe4 (21...♘g4? 22 ♘e5! and wins) 22 ♙xe4 ♘xe4 23 ♘e5+ ♘xg3 24 ♚xg3+ ♜f8 25 ♘g6+; while an unclear position results from 20 ♚g3 ♚f6 21 ♘e5+ ♜h8 22 ♘d7 ♚c3 23 ♘e5.

19 ♖f3 ♘e4

19...c4 is risky because of 20 ♖e7+ ♙xe7 21 ♙xh7+ (better than 21 ♙xh7+ ♜f8 22 ♙g6) 21...♜f8 22 ♙g3 c3 23 ♙a3 f5 24 ♙g6 with an attack.

20 xe4 **dxe4**

21 Hg3

The rook joins in the assault on Black's weakened king position. Naturally enough, Anand tries to

organize counterplay on the open
d-file.

21 ... **Rad8**

22 ♖xd8 ♔xd8

23 ♔g4

23 ♖h5? would be a mistake, since White would have to answer 23...♗d5 (23...♗d2!? 24 h3 ♖xc2) with 24 ♘e5. Then after 24...♞e7 Black retains too many defensive resources.

23 ... ♠d5 (D)

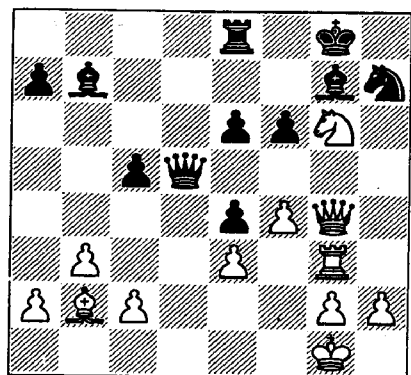
Black had some other possibilities here:

a) On 23...♖d2 White would have played 24 h4, and if 24...♙xc2, then 25 ♘f8 ♜e7 26 ♘h7 ♙xb2 27 ♙g6 ♜f7 28 h5 ♙d5 29 h6 f5 30 hxg7 with advantage; if instead 24...f5, there would follow 25 ♙h5 ♙e1+ 26 ♘h2 ♙xg3+ 27 ♘xg3 ♙xb2 28 ♘e5 ♜e7 29 ♙d1 with the better game for White.

b) 23...f5 was worth considering. In my view, after the continuation 24 ♖h5 ♜f6 25 ♜e7+ ♜xe7 (stronger than 25...♜xe7 26 ♜xf6) 26 ♜xf6 ♜d2 27 h3 (27 ♜xg7+ ♜xg7 28 ♜e8+ leads to perpetual check) 27...♜e1+ 28 ♜h2 ♜xg3+ 29 ♜xg3 ♜xf6 30 ♜f2 White has only slightly the better chances.

24 h4

The most natural way to go about things. White gives his king some *luft* and brings his pawn into the attack. However, he had a less



W

obvious way of conducting the assault. I rejected 24 dxf8!? on account of 24...d5 (24...e7 is weaker in view of 25 dxf7 e7 26 dxf6):

a) At this point it is true that 25 f5 g5 26 h5 promises nothing, since Black would reply not with 26...xf8 (when 27 g6 h6 28 d4! cxd4 29 xh6 d7 30 g7 wins for White) but with either 26...xf8 or 26...xb2. The former would lead to perpetual check: 26...xf8 27 xg7+ xg7 28 h6+ f7 29 f6+. The more interesting line is 26...xb2 27 dh7 g7 28 h6+ (or 28 c3 xc3 29 df6 h8 30 dxd5 xh5 31 dxc3 xc6) 28...f7, and it is not simple for White to demonstrate the correctness of his attack.

b) However, there is at move 25 another, stronger, continuation which only entered my head when

the game was over. White should pursue the black knight with 25 dh7!. This time, as the following variations show, it is Black who has difficult problems to solve.

b1) 25...d8 26 dxf6+ xf6 27 xxf6 d1+ 28 xd1 xd1+ 29 f2. White regains his piece and should win.

b2) 25...f5 26 df6+! (not 26 e2 xb2 27 xg5+ f7 28 c4 d3 29 xb2 xe3+) 26...xf6 27 wh5 and now:

b21) 27...d8 28 g6+ (28 xxf6 d1+ 29 xd1 xd1+ 30 f2 d2+ 31 e1 xc2 32 fxg5 is not bad either) 28...xf8 29 xxf6+ e8 30 xg5 d1+ 31 f2 d2+ 32 g3 xe3+ 33 h4 xf4+ 34 h3. The king is now sheltered from checks, and White wins.

b22) 27...xb2 28 xe8+ h7 29 h4!? with a plus (29 wh5+ g8 30 xg5+ f8 31 h3 promises less).

b3) 25...d2 26 h3 e1+ 27 dh2 xg3+ 28 xg3 dh7 29 e1 and again the advantage is on White's side.

24 ... f5

If 24...f5, then 25 wh5.

25 d1 d5

26 g4 f5

You might expect the game to end in repetition, especially since, true to my usual habit, I was already running short of time.

27 d1 d5

28 e2!

White plucks up courage and continues the fight. It isn't simple for Black to find a useful move here. Thus, 28...d6 is met by 29 g4 d8 30 h2 d7 31 e5 (31 h5 f5) 31...e7 (not 31...fe5 32 xe5 e7 33 xg7) 32 h5 a6 33 h6 with a ferocious attack; while if 28...c6, White has the decisive 29 h5 f7 30 g4 g8 31 h6. The line Black chooses makes hardly any essential difference to the situation.

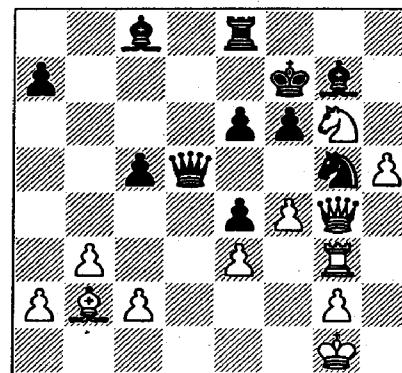
28 ... c8

29 h5

This pawn takes on the role of a battering ram. It breaks up the seemingly harmonious co-ordination of Black's pieces.

29 ... f7

30 g4 g5! (D)



W

Viswanathan Anand defends himself with great ingenuity. The counter-sacrifice of a piece is his best practical chance.

31 fxg5?!

Unfortunately, time shortage and fatigue had already begun to affect me – instead of searching for the strongest move, I was content with 'a bird in the hand'. The correct line is 31 e5+! fe5 32 fxg5. The strong connected passed pawns should quickly decide the game, for example: 32...d8 33 h6 d1+ 34 xd1 xd1+ 35 h2.

31 ... f5

32 e2 xb2

33 c4 d6

34 xb2 e5!

I had underestimated this move. Of course Black would lose at once with 34...xg3? 35 f6+ g8 36 h8+ f7 37 h7#. Now, however, my pieces lose their co-ordination, which not only makes it hard to exploit the extra material but hands the initiative to my opponent.

35 h3?!

An ineffective manoeuvre. A better move was 35 h2 (35 c1!?), so as to answer 35...f4 with 36 exf4 exf4 37 f2 e3 38 xf4+ xf4 39 dxf4 e2 40 xe2 xe2 41 g6+ g7 42 g5, when White has winning chances.

35 ... f4

36 ♖h4

The consequences of the exchange sacrifice 36 exf4 are unclear: 36...♙xh3 37 ♖xe5+ ♜g8 38 gxf3 ♜d1+ 39 ♜f2 ♜d8 40 ♜g3.

36 ... fxe3
37 ♜h2?

In time-trouble White loses the thread altogether and blunders. The right move was 37 ♜e2!, when at least there would be no risk of losing – as the following variations demonstrate:

a) 37...♜d2 38 ♜f1+.

b) 37...♜d4 can be met by 38 ♜h2!? or 38 h6!? ♙f5 39 h7 ♙xg6 40 h8 ♜ ♙xh8 41 ♙xh8.

c) 37...♜d3! 38 ♜f1+! ♜g8 39 ♜f6! (39 h6? ♜xf1+ 40 ♜xf1 ♜h7) 39...e2 40 ♜h8+.

37 ... ♙f5!
38 ♜e2 ♜d2
39 ♜f1 ♜e6
40 ♙xe4 ♙xe4

0-1

Although White gained no reward for his boldness in this game, I was not unduly upset about the half-point I threw away through declining the draw. I would have been far more annoyed if I had settled for repetition and afterwards discovered the win. From my own experience I can assure the reader that playing for the win in such

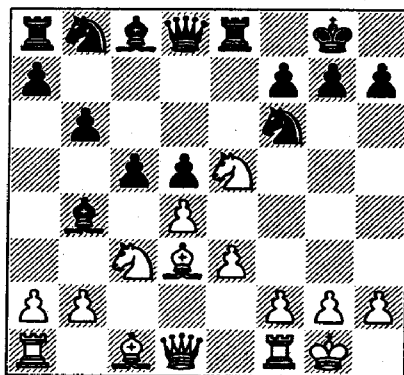
situations brings success more often than catastrophe; in any event it brings more creative satisfaction than prematurely terminating the fight.

Yusupov – Gulko

Novgorod 1995

Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♖c3 ♙b4 4 e3
0-0 5 ♙d3 d5 6 ♖f3 c5 7 0-0 b6 8
cxd5 exd5 9 ♖e5 ♜e8 (D)



W

This game was played in the last round of a tournament in which I had done very badly; I was right down among the also-rans. I was therefore keen to score my first win, albeit at the very finish. I cannot say I was prepared for the variation my opponent played, but the shape of the game was more or less familiar to me – after all, the

Nimzo-Indian has a firm place in my opening repertoire. Black's somewhat mysterious ninth move is quite simple to explain: he wants to preserve the option of playing ...♙a6 without loss of tempo. (If 9...♙a6 at once, White has the unpleasant 10 ♖c6!.) However, without undue effort, I now succeeded in devising an idea which, though not original, is perfectly reasonable; in this position, as I later found out, it constituted a novelty.

10 ♖e2!

After 10 ♙d2 Black can carry out his plan with 10...♙a6; the reply 11 ♖c6? is no longer any good, on account of 11...♖xc6 12 ♙xa6 cxd4 13 ♙b7 dxc3 14 bxc3 ♖a5! 15 ♙xa8 ♙c5. This and several other variations are taken from Boris Gulko's notes in *Informator* 63. On the other hand, 11 ♙xa6 ♖xa6 12 ♜a4 ♜c8 13 ♜ac1 ♜b7 14 ♜c6 ♜ab8 leads to equality, Portisch-Spassky, Candidates match (14), Geneva 1977.

The point of the move White played is clear: the knight is heading for g3, where it will not only control e4 – a particularly important square in this variation – but also be ready to join in an attack on the king via f5. White's slight loss of time is fully compensated for by the precarious position of Black's dark-squared bishop, which means

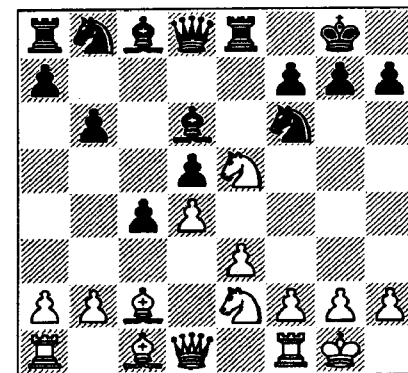
that Black cannot maintain the central tension; he must either exchange on d4, thereby liberating the white queen's bishop, or release the central pressure by advancing his c-pawn.

10 ... c4

In the case of 10...cxd4 11 exd4 ♙a6 12 ♙xa6 ♖xa6, Gulko didn't like 13 ♙g5.

11 ♙c2 ♙d6?! (D)

A loss of tempo which increases Black's difficulties. After the natural 11...♙b7 Gulko was afraid of 12 b3!?, but this would have been the lesser evil; Black could defend with 12...cxb3 13 ♙xb3 ♙d6.



W

12 f4!

A standard idea. This set-up is good if White succeeds in controlling e4 – as he can in the present case. It would be illogical to initiate play on the queenside: 12 b3

b5 13 a4 cxb3 14 ♖xb3 b4, with chances for both sides.

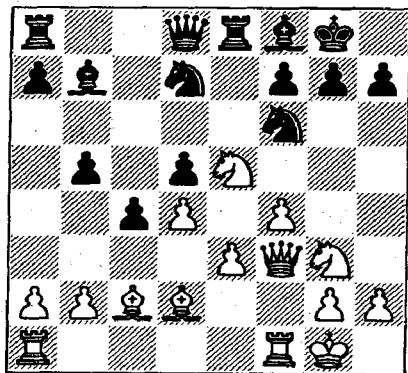
12 ... b5
13 ♖g3 ♖bd7?!

Black gives his opponent additional chances; 13...♖b7 was more accurate.

14 ♖f3

I decided not to deviate from my basic plan. The alternative 14 e4!? would have obscure consequences after 14...♖b6 15 ♖c6!? (15 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 16 e5 ♖g4 17 ♖d2 ♖g8 is unconvincing for White) 15...♖c7 16 e5 ♖g4 (Gulko gives 16...♖fd7 17 exd6 ♖xc6 18 ♖f5 ♖h8 19 ♖g4 g6 20 ♖h6) 17 ♖d2 ♖xc6 18 exf6.

14 ... ♖b7
15 ♖d2 ♖f8?! (D)
15...♖f8!? is more logical.



W

16 a4!?

An interesting and somewhat unexpected decision. White is seeking

something more than the standard development of the attack by 16 ♖f5 g6 17 ♖h3 gxf5 18 ♖xf5. By weakening his opponent's queenside he brings additional factors into play.

16 ... b4!?

The thematic continuation. After 16...a6 17 ♖f5 g6 18 ♖h3 gxf5 19 ♖xf5 ♖b6 20 ♖f3 White has a powerful attack.

17 a5

Not, of course, 17 ♖xc4? ♖c8 18 b3 ♖a8, when White loses a piece.

17 ... ♖c8

Perhaps he should have tried 17...c3. Black probably feared 18 a6, not liking 18...♖xa6 19 ♖xa6 cxd2 20 ♖e2 ♖c8 21 ♖f5 ♖b7 22 ♖fa1, though 18...cxb2 19 ♖a2 ♖c8 was worth considering.

18 a6 ♖a8
19 ♖f5 c3!?

19...♖e4? would be a mistake due to 20 ♖xe4 dxe4 21 ♖g4, when 21...g6 fails to 22 ♖xd7. On the other hand if 19...g6, White would have a new resource thanks to the queenside advance he has provoked: 20 ♖xb4!? gxf5 (20...♖xb4 21 ♖h6+ ♖g7 22 ♖hxf7 ♖e7 23 ♖h3) 21 ♖g3+ ♖g7 22 ♖xf5.

20 bxc3 g6
21 ♖h3! b3!

Accepting the knight sacrifice is hazardous. After 21...gxf5 22 ♖xf5

♖b6 23 ♖f3 ♖g7 24 ♖g3 ♖f8 25 cxb4 White already has three pawns for the piece as well as a dangerous initiative. Gulko endeavours to get at least *some* counterplay.

22 ♖xb3 ♖e4

At the cost of two pawns Black has succeeded in establishing his knight in the centre. Although objectively his counterplay is insufficient, he has managed to set his opponent some serious practical problems by suddenly transforming the situation on the board. After 22...gxf5 23 ♖xf5 it would have been much easier for White to conduct his attack.

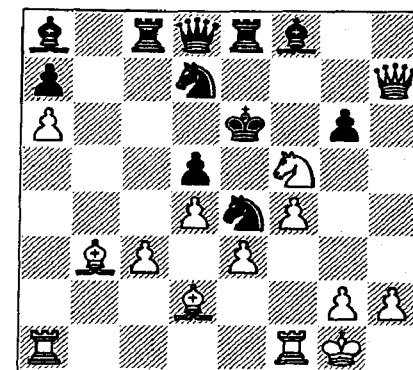
23 ♖xf7!

This of course is the right continuation, as the black king will now have to set off on a walk. 23 ♖e1 was out of the question, since Black can defend by 23...♖xe5 24 fxe5 gxf5 25 ♖xf5 ♖c7.

23 ... ♖xf7

24 ♖xh7+ ♖e6 (D)

The critical moment of the game. White saw the correct continuation, but failed to reach the right verdict on the ending to which the main variation leads. In addition I was in a strongly combinative mood, and the temptation to draw the black king further forward was too great. Another of my weaknesses took its toll: I only have to play a couple of attractive moves,



W

and I experience the desire to 'create a work of art'. Excessive emotions during play have, alas, proved harmful to me more than once.

25 ♖g8+?!

In our post-mortem analysis we established that White should have played 25 ♖xg6+ ♖f6 26 ♖g7+! (26 ♖g8+ ♖f7 27 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 28 ♖e1 ♖xc3 is unclear). If now 26...♖xg7, then 27 ♖xe4+ ♖d6 (27...♖f7 28 ♖xd5+) 28 ♖e5+! and wins. There is more point in 26...♖e7 27 ♖xf6+ ♖dxf6 28 ♖xe8 ♖xd2 29 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 30 ♖a4 ♖xf1 31 ♖xf1 ♖xc3, but after 32 ♖e2 (32 ♖b1!? ♖c6 33 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 34 ♖f2 is also strong) 32...♖c4 (or 32...♖a3 33 ♖b1 ♖c1 34 ♖b3) there is no doubt about White's advantage.

Now, however, he simply has insufficient reserves to achieve more than perpetual check.

25 ... ♖xf5

26 g4+

White gains nothing from 26 ♖f7+ in view of the reply 26... ♖f6 27 ♖xd7+ ♖e6.

26 ... ♖f6

27 f5

White had set great store by this move. On the other hand 27 ♖e1 is bad on account of 27... ♖e7 28 ♖h4+ ♖df6 29 ♖xg6 ♖xc3.

27 ... ♖g7!

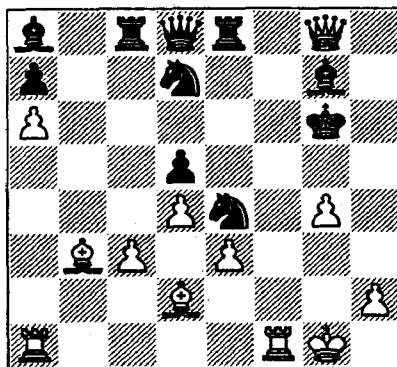
A sober assessment of the position; Black decides to force a draw. Instead, 27... gxf5?! 28 ♖xf5+ ♖e7 was too risky in view of 29 ♖xd5! (29 ♖f7+ ♖d6 30 ♖xd5+ ♖c7) 29... ♖xd5 30 ♖xd5. White now obtains a promising position after either 30... ♖ef6 31 ♖f3 ♖d6 32 e4! ♖xe4 33 ♖f4+ ♖c6 34 ♖e1 (but not 34 ♖e5 ♖xe5 35 dxe5, because of 35... ♖c5+ 36 ♖f1 ♖d5), or 30... ♖d6 31 ♖af1! ♖b6 (Black is mated after 31... ♖xf5 32 ♖xf5 ♖c7 33 e4 ♖d8 34 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 35 ♖g5+) 32 ♖f7+ ♖d8 33 c4 ♖xa6 34 ♖a5+ ♖c7 35 ♖lf6!.

28 fxg6+

28 ♖h7 ♖g8 29 ♖xg6+ ♖e7 30 ♖e6+ ♖f8 31 ♖c1 fails to 31... ♖g5 32 ♖a3+ ♖c5 33 ♖g6 ♖xd4.

28 ... ♖xg6 (D)

White now repeats moves a few times, so that he can reach the time-control and check the variations accurately. Alas, this will



W

confirm that the win, sadly, has slipped away.

29 ♖f7+	♖h7
30 ♖f5+	♖g8
31 ♖f7+	♖h8
32 ♖h5+	♖g8
33 ♖f7+	♖h8
34 ♖h5+	♖g8
35 ♖xd5+	♖xd5
36 ♖xd5+	♖h8
37 ♖h5+	♖g8
38 ♖f7+	♖h8

There is no sense in giving White chances with 38... ♖h7?! 39 ♖f5 ♖df6 40 ♖aa5 ♖xa5 41 ♖xa5 ♖xd2 42 g5.

39 ♖h5+	♖g8
40 ♖f7+	♖h8

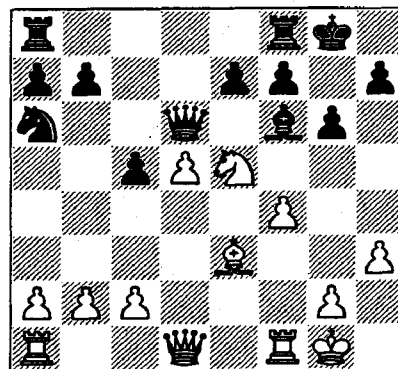
1/2-1/2

To conclude, I will give another example of a botched attack, although this time things ended happily for the author.

Yusupov – Adams Dortmund 1994 Pirc Defence

This too was a last-round game which I very much wanted to win, to do something to rectify my tournament standing. The encounter meant even more to my opponent, who would have had a chance of first place if he had won.

1 d4 d6 2 e4 ♖f6 3 ♖c3 g6 4 f4 ♖g7 5 ♖f3 c5 6 ♖b5+ ♖d7 7 e5 ♖g4 8 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 9 d5 dxe5 10 h3 e4 11 ♖xe4 ♖f6 12 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 13 0-0 0-0 14 ♖e3!? ♖a6 15 ♖e5 ♖d6 (D)



W

White has played the opening confidently, the chief explanation being that I had had this variation – and the diagram position in particular – in a Bundesliga game against Vlastimil Hort. Perhaps

Adams simply didn't know about that game, which was played a few months before Dortmund.

16 ♖g4

A stock idea in this variation. From g4 the knight gives quite good support to the attack, and threatens to go to h6 at a suitable moment.

16 ... ♖xb2

17 ♖b1 ♖g7

18 f5

An essential link in the plan. Regaining the pawn can wait (18 ♖xb7 would be met by 18... f5). It is far more important to develop White's kingside initiative and secure h6 for the knight.

18 ... ♖c7?!

In the game I mentioned, Hort played the stronger 18... ♖b4!? in an effort to obtain counterplay. Adams's move is rather passive, enabling White to dictate the further course of events.

After the text-move (18... ♖c7) White seems to have only too wide a choice:

a) 19 c4 b5.

b) 19 f6 exf6 20 ♖f4 ♖d8.

c) 19 ♖h6+!? ♖xh6 20 ♖xh6 ♖fd8 21 c4 gxf5 22 ♖f4 e5.

d) 19 ♖f4!? ♖d4+! (as Adams pointed out, 19... ♖d8 is dangerous for Black: 20 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 21 d6 ♖d7 22 dxe7 ♖d4+ 23 ♖h1 ♖xe7 24 f6, with an attack) 20 ♖xd4 cxd4 21 ♖xd6 exd6 22 ♖xb7

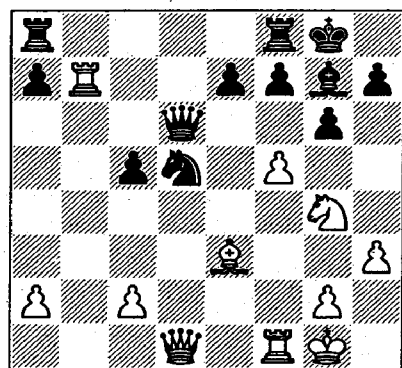
♖ac8! (22...♟xd5 23 f6, with ♟h6+ to follow – Black is weak on f7), and if 23 f6, then 23...h5.

During the game I was mainly choosing between this last variation, which I didn't think was too clear, and the move I actually played.

19 ♖xb7!

The start of a forcing operation. Black's reply is forced, as White threatens 20 ♖f4.

19 ... ♟xd5 (D)



W

20 f6!

The point of White's idea is to utilize the position of the queens opposing one another.

20 ... ♟xf6

20...♟xf6 is weaker on account of 21 ♖xf6 ♟xf6 22 ♖xd6 exd6 23 ♟xf6+ ♟g7 24 ♟g4! with a won position.

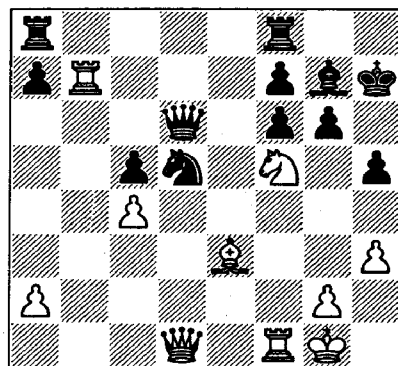
21 c4 h5

22 ♟h6+

But not 22 ♟f2? in view of 22...♖g3 23 ♖xc5 ♟f4.

22 ... ♟h7

23 ♟f5 (D)



B

White has not succeeded in winning a piece, but with this move he totally wrecks his opponent's pawn structure.

23 ... gxf5

Although Black is nominally a pawn up after 23...♖c6 24 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 25 cxd5 gxf5 26 ♖xc5, an ending with that kind of pawn structure can scarcely give him any pleasure.

24 cxd5 ♟g8

25 ♖xf5

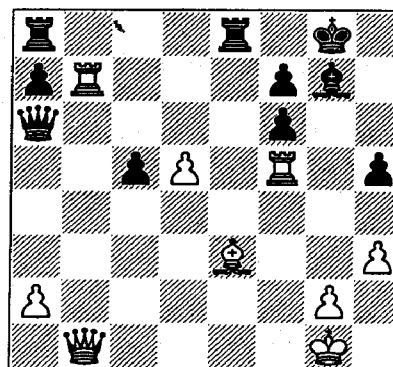
An interesting alternative is 25 ♖f4!? ♖a6 26 ♖b1, when White ignores the f-pawns altogether and concentrates his efforts on forcing his passed pawn forward.

25 ... ♖a6

26 ♖b1 ♖fe8 (D)

I expected 26...♖e2, when the simplest way to maintain the advantage is 27 ♖f2. White could also play 27 ♖xc5 ♖fc8 and then 28 ♖b2 – but not 28 d6? ♖xc5 29 ♖xc5 ♖e3+ 30 ♟h1 ♖xc5 31 ♖b8+ ♖xb8 32 ♖xb8+ ♟h7 33 d7, on account of 33...♖c1+ (inverting the move-order doesn't work; on 33...♖h6? White wins by 34 ♖b1+) 34 ♟h2 ♖h6 35 d8 ♖ ♖f4+.

The move played similarly parries the obvious threat of 27 ♖xh5.



W

I was in no doubt about my assessment of the position, but on analysing the variations I started to get confused. Everywhere I saw visions of some kind of counter-play for Black. Hence I decided to play something fairly simple, by analogy with 26...♖e2 27 ♖f2. I

should, of course, have put a little effort into checking that after the straightforward 27 ♖xc5 Black's minimal activity gives no great cause for concern: 27...♖a5 is answered by 28 ♖f2, and 27...♖ac8 by 28 d6. The sharpest continuation, 27...♖e2, leads to an easy win for White after 28 ♖b8+ (28 ♖xh5? ♖xg2+) 28...♖xb8 29 ♖xb8+ ♟h7 30 ♖xh5+ ♟g6 31 ♖h4!.

27 ♖f2?

I reckoned that after the virtually forced exchange of rooks my passed pawn would decide the game, but I was overlooking a strong defensive manoeuvre for my opponent.

27 ... ♖e5

28 ♖b8+ ♖xb8

29 ♖xb8+ ♟h7

30 ♖b1

A useful ploy – White repeats moves to avoid time-trouble.

30 ... ♟g8

31 ♖b8+ ♟h7

32 ♖b1 ♟g8

33 ♖xe5 fxe5

34 ♖b8+ ♟h7

35 ♖c7

I had been pinning my hopes on this move. There is no danger for Black in 35 d6 ♖d3 (35...♖f6) 36 ♖c7 ♟g6 (36...c4 37 ♖xf7 ♖xd6 38 ♖xh5+ ♖h6 is also playable) 37 d7 ♖f6. But now, seeing that White is threatening to take on f7

as well as to push his passed pawn, I was feeling optimistic – until I spotted Black's defence. My opponent spotted it too, of course – Adams doesn't miss a chance like this!

35 ... ♖xa2!

36 ♖xf7 ♖b1+

This is the point! The queen crosses to the kingside with tempo.

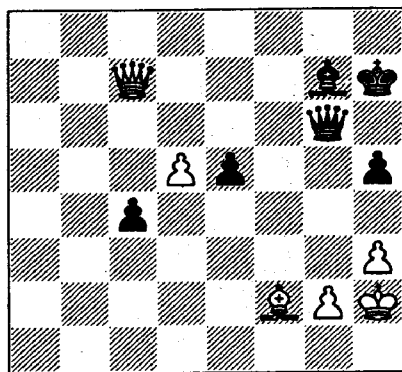
37 ♔h2 ♖g6!

38 ♖xa7

Mindful of his bad play in the technical stage of the game, White takes a sensible practical decision – to minimize the possibility of losing. The bolder 38 ♖c7 ♖f5 would leave the black passed a-pawn alive.

38 ... c4

39 ♖c7 (D)



B

39 ... ♖d3?

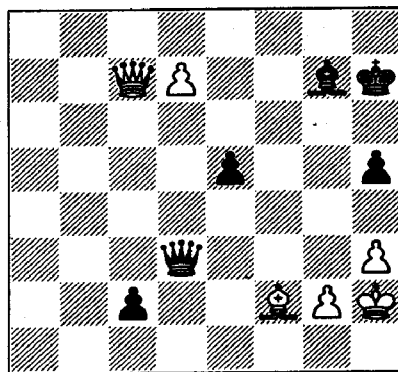
Adams was disappointed by the way the game had gone – it had

offered him no chance of first prize in the tournament. Unable to concentrate fully on fighting for the draw, he played this natural but losing move almost instantaneously. Yet Black could have saved himself by 39...♖f5!! After 40 ♔g3 ♖e4 41 d6 (41 ♖f7 also draws) 41...h4 or 40 ♔e3 ♖e4 41 ♔g5 ♖xd5 (41...♔g6 42 d6 ♔f6 43 ♔xf6 ♖f4+ 44 ♔g1 ♖e3+ 45 ♔f1 ♖d3+ is also possible) 42 ♔f6 ♖g8 43 ♔xe5 ♔h8 44 ♔xg7+ ♖xg7 45 ♖xc4 ♖e5+ Black should be able to draw.

40 d6 c3

40...♔g6 41 d7 ♔f6 was rather more tenacious, though after 42 ♔b6 Black's position is difficult. My opponent had obviously overlooked White's 42nd move.

41 d7 c2 (D)



W

42 ♔e3!

Black's downfall is due to the fact that his king is on the same rank as the white queen, so that if the black bishop moves, White has a decisive discovered check.

42 ... ♖xe3

43 ♖xc2+ e4

44 ♖c7!

Simplest. There is no point in working out the more complicated 44 d8 ♖ ♔e5+ (though that too is adequate to win) when a simple solution is available.

1-0

10 A Controversial Position

Mark Dvoretsky

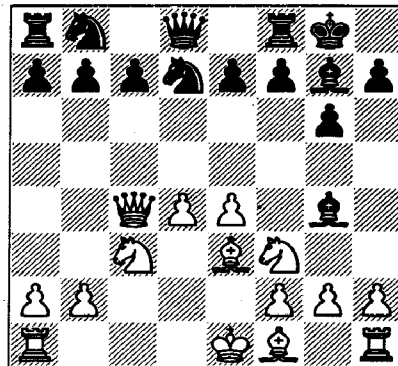
To risk or not to risk? To sacrifice or not to sacrifice? We quite frequently have to solve this kind of problem. Clearly there is not, and cannot be, any general recipe here. The best advice I can give my readers is to consult books and articles in which such situations are discussed. Try them out on yourself; study the position deeply and try to decide how you would handle it, then compare your ideas with the conclusions drawn by the annotator. In this way you will not only develop your technique of analysis, you will also learn to decide intuitively what degree of risk is acceptable.

I want to draw your attention to the analysis of a sharp position which occurred in a game by Vladimir Simagin (a master at the time; he gained the grandmaster title much later). Eleven years after this game, and without prior knowledge of it, Bobby Fischer reached the same position. Fischer's opinion of it differed from Simagin's. You will have the opportunity to

choose between the two – to decide whose interpretation of the position was nearer the truth.

Shamkovich – Simagin Leningrad 1951 Grünfeld Defence

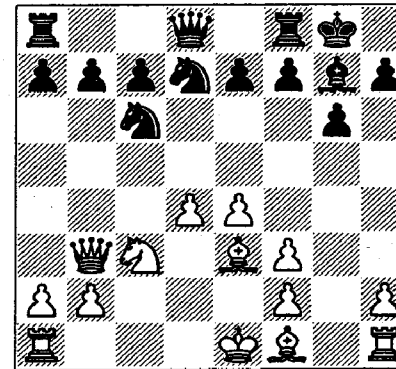
- | | |
|--------|----------|
| 1 d4 | ♟f6 |
| 2 c4 | g6 |
| 3 ♘c3 | d5 |
| 4 ♘f3 | ♙g7 |
| 5 ♖b3 | dxc4 |
| 6 ♖xc4 | 0-0 |
| 7 e4 | ♙g4 |
| 8 ♙e3 | ♞fd7 (D) |



W

9 ♖b3 ♟xf3
Black wants to develop his knight on c6, but the immediate 9...♞c6 comes up against 10 ♖xb7 ♞a5 11 ♖a6, as in Polugaevsky-Simagin, USSR Championship, Leningrad 1960. (According to the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, though, the position is unclear after 11...c5 12 dxc5 ♖b8.) The preliminary exchange on f3, removing one of the defenders of d4, gives White no time to take the b-pawn. The move has its drawbacks too, however; hence 9...♞b6 has become the chief theoretical continuation.

- 10 gxf3 ♞c6 (D)

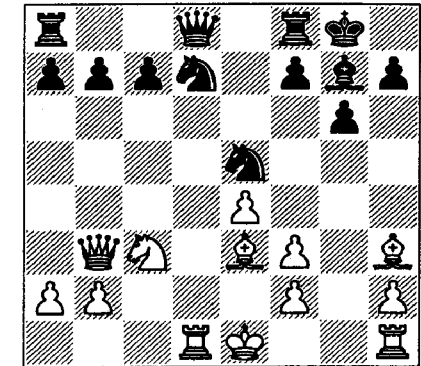


W

- 11 ♖d1?

This justifies Black's play. As subsequent practice has shown, White can gain an advantage with 11 0-0-0!.

- 11 ... e5
12 dxe5
12 d5?! ♞d4 is bad for White.
12 ... ♞cxe5
13 ♙h3 (D)
Leonid Shamkovich goes onto the offensive, hoping to exploit the pinned d7-knight. Black can answer 13 ♙e2 with the excellent move 13...♖h4! (and if 14 f4, then 14...♞g4).



B

- 13 ... ♞xf3+!
14 ♙e2

On 14 ♙f1, Simagin gives the continuation 14...♞fe5! 15 ♙xd7 ♞xd7 16 ♖b5 c6 17 ♖xb7 ♙xc3 18 bxc3 ♖h4! (I may add that Black also has 18...♞c5!). Now 19 ♖xd7? fails to 19...♖ad8, while if 19...♖xe4 is strong.

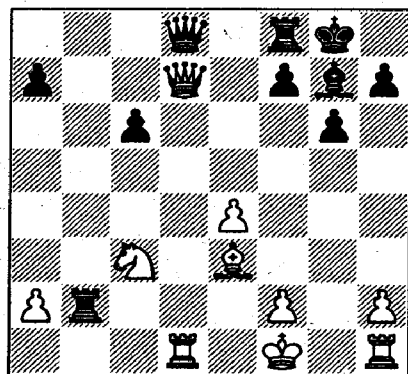
- 14 ... ♞fe5
15 ♙xd7

Or 15 Rxd7 Wh4! (better than 15... Qxd7 16 Rd1). Another bad line is 15 f4 Wh4 16 Qxd7 Qxd7 17 Rxd7 Wg4+ .

15 ... Qxd7
16 Wb5 c6
17 Wxb7 Rb8
18 Wxd7

Not, of course, 18 Wxc6? Rxb2+ 19 Qf1 Wh4! .

18 ... Rxb2+
19 Qf1 (D)



B

Here is the key position, where I suggest you try to decide how Black should continue.

He has the choice between winning the knight back – which leads to an approximately level ending – and trying to attack while remaining a piece down, by means of 19... Wf6 (aiming at the weak f3-square). Which would you have preferred?

In the game Evans-Fischer, USA Championship, New York 1962/3 Black didn't risk the complications and settled for the simple line 19... Wxd7 20 Rxd7 Qxc3 , when a draw became a virtual certainty: 21 Rxa7 Re8 22 Ra4 Qb4 23 Qd4 Rc2 24 Rxb4 c5 25 Qxc5 Rxc5 26 Qg2 Rc2 27 a4 Rd8 28 Qg3 Ra2 29 Rc1 Rdd2 30 Rf1 Rd3+ 31 f3 Rda3 32 Rd1 Rxa4 33 Rd8+ Qg7 $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$.

Simagin played differently. He declined the draw that was offered at this moment, and sacrificed a piece.

19 ... Wf6!?

Fischer considered the sacrifice completely unsound; Simagin tried to demonstrate that the combination wins for Black. I suggest that the truth lies somewhere in between. Let us look at the variations.

a) 20 Qa4? . This is what Shamkovich played. After 20... Rxa2 21 Qc5 Wf3 22 Qg1 (22 Rg1 We2+ 23 Qg2 Wxe3) 22... Qh6! Black's attack was irresistible: 23 Qd4 Wxd1+ 24 Qg2 Wd2 25 Wd6 Qe3! 26 Qd7 Wxf2+ 27 Qh3 Wg2+ 0-1.

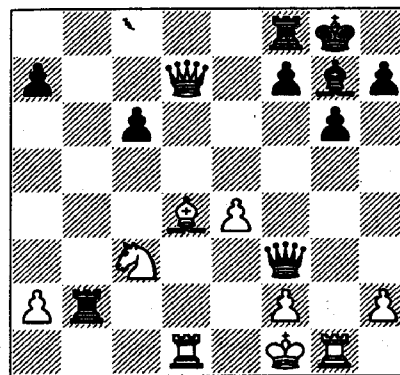
b) 20 Qe2? Wf3 . 21 Qg3 Qh6 22 Qxa7 (22 Qc5 doesn't alter anything: 22... Rc2 23 Qxa7 Ra8! 24 Re1 Rxa2) 22... Ra8! (threatening 23... Rxa7) 23 Re1 (23 Qc5 Qf8 24 Qe3 Rxa2 ; 23 Ra1 Rxf2+! 24 Qxf2 Qe3) 23... Rxa2 24 Qc5

Qd2! (24... Rc2 is also strong) 25 Qb1 Ra1 26 Wb7 Qc3! with the decisive threat of 27... Rxb1+ 28 Wxb1 Ra1 (analysis by Simagin).

c) 20 Qd4!? and now:

c1) 20... Wh4 is inferior owing to the excellent 21 Qd5! , as indicated by Fischer. After 21... Wxe4 (21... cxd5 22 Qxb2 ; 21... Qxd4 22 Qe7+) 22 Qe7+ Qh8 23 Qxg7+ Qxg7 24 Wd4+ Wxd4 25 Rxd4 , White should win with his extra piece.

c2) 20... Wf3 21 Rg1 (D) (better than 21 Qg1 c5).



B

It was because of this continuation that Fischer rejected the piece sacrifice, but he was wrong. After all, if Black wants, he can force a draw here with 21... Rc2! 22 Rg3 (necessary) 22... Wh1+ 23 Rg1 Wf3 . The only question is whether Black should be satisfied with a

drawn result, or whether he is justified in continuing the attack with 21...c5. Simagin thinks this is justified. He gives the variation 22 Rg3 Wh1+ 23 Rg1 Wxh2 24 Rg2 Wh1+ 25 Rg1 Wh4! , with an attack. He is mistaken, though; White can play more strongly with 22 Qxc5! Qxc3 23 Wd3! Wf6 24 Rg3 . While permitting his opponent to restore the material balance, White has activated his forces and seized the initiative. Black loses at once with 24... Qb4?? 25 Qd4 (this occurred in a correspondence game Maclellan-Kokorin, 1968; Black resigned). In the event of 24... Qe5 25 Rf3 Wh4 , White achieves no more than a draw with 26 Qxf8 Wxh2 27 Rd2 Rb1+ 28 Qe2 Wg1 29 Rd1 Rb2+ 30 Rd2 Rb1 , but the simple 26 h3!! places Black in insuperable difficulties. For instance: 26... Rfb8 (26... Rc8? 27 Wd7 Rxc5 28 Wxf7+ and mates) 27 Rxf7! (stronger than 27 Wd5 Qf4! 28 Qd6? Rxf2+! 29 Rxf2 Wxh3+) 27... Qxf7 28 Wd7+ Qg8 29 We6+ , and White wins (analysis by Larry Evans).

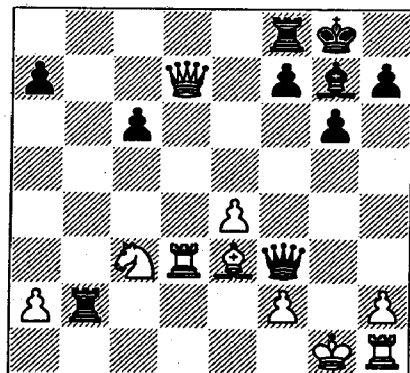
So with correct play, 20 Qd4 leads to a draw; in other words it does not refute Simagin's combination.

d) There is just one more possibility for us to examine; in my view it is the strongest:

20 ♖d3! ♔f3

21 ♕g1! (D)

21... ♕xc3 22 ♖xc3 ♖fb8 (threatening 23... ♖xf2+!) 23 ♔xc6 ♖d8 24 ♖c1 ♔e2+ 25 ♕g2 ♔xe3.



B

21 ... ♕xc3

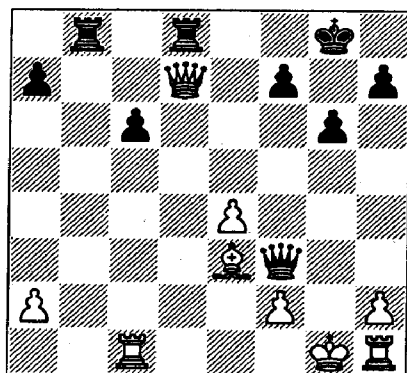
Simagin recommended this way of playing the attack in his notes to the game. I have also looked at 21... ♖c2. Then 22 ♕d2? ♖xd2! and 22 ♕c5?! ♔f4 23 ♔d6 ♔xd6! 24 ♕xd6 ♖d8 25 ♖d1 ♕e5 are both mistaken replies, leading to a pleasant endgame for Black. 22 ♕xa7 is playable, though after 22... ♖c1+ 23 ♖d1 ♔xe4 24 ♕e3 ♖a1 Black retains distinct counter-chances. Best of all is the immediate 22 ♖d1!; White isn't afraid of 22... ♖e2 because of 23 ♕d2. Black has insufficient compensation for his sacrificed piece.

22 ♖xc3 ♖bb8

An unexpected retreat; Black sets up the threat of 23... ♖fd8. Instead, 22... ♖e2 fails to 23 ♔d1!.

23 ♖c1 ♖fd8 (D)

Simagin now continues with 24 ♔xc6 ♖d1+ 25 ♖xd1 ♔xd1+ 26 ♕g2 ♔g4+ 27 ♕f1 ♖d8! and wins. However, the defence can be improved.



W

24 ♔c7!

By bringing his queen back to g3, White repulses the attack. Black still has some initiative, but it obviously does not compensate for the sacrificed piece.

Let us sum up. Objectively Fischer was right; Simagin's bold attack could have been refuted. However, from the practical standpoint, Black's risk seems to me to be justified. In the majority of variations he creates lethal threats.

Even after 20 ♖d3 his position still looks menacing, and he has reason to hope that he will still find ways of reaching at least a draw. In addition, the likelihood that his op-

ponent will analyse the position infallibly and discover the strongest moves over the board is fairly slim. Such chances are worth taking!

11 Attacking after Castling on Opposite Wings

Mark Dvoretsky

The subject of this chapter is one with which most of you are sure to be familiar. It is treated in numerous books on the middlegame. I can hardly say anything new about it, nor am I attempting to. We are simply going to examine a few games. In the course of analysing them, we shall recall the chief principles applicable to positions where the kings have castled on different sides and we shall practise putting those principles into operation.

T. Georgadze – Dvoretsky

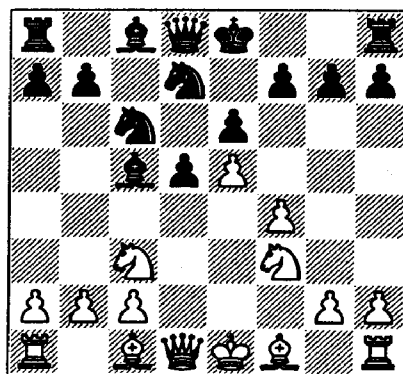
USSR Spartakiad, Moscow 1967

French Defence

- | | |
|--------|------|
| 1 e4 | e6 |
| 2 d4 | d5 |
| 3 ♘c3 | ♘f6 |
| 4 e5 | ♘fd7 |
| 5 f4 | c5 |
| 6 ♘f3 | ♘c6 |
| 7 dxc5 | |

This move promises White no advantage. 7 ♖e3! is thematic.

- 7 ... ♗xc5 (D)
7...♘xc5 is not bad either.



W

8 ♖d3 f6
8...0-0? is a mistake in view of the standard bishop sacrifice 9 ♖xh7+! ♗xh7 10 ♘g5+. The move played is perfectly logical – I prepare to castle, and at the same time I exchange the strong central pawn on e5. Other moves have also been played here: 8...♘b4, or 8...a6 followed by 9...♗c7. The knight sortie isn't to my liking – White

may simply withdraw his bishop to e2, but he can also permit an exchange on d3 and recapture with the c-pawn. Is it worth losing two tempi in the opening, even for the sake of exchanging the opponent's powerful bishop?

- | | |
|--------|------|
| 9 exf6 | ♘xf6 |
| 10 ♗e2 | a6 |

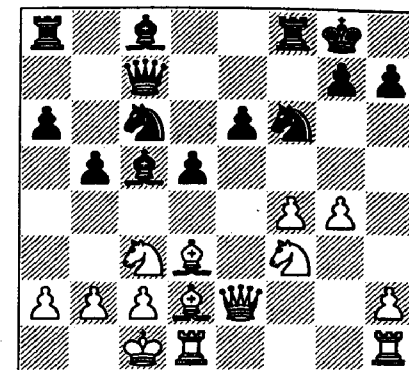
I could simply have castled, but was attracted by the idea of a positional trap. The enticing 11 f5?! would allow an advantageous pawn sacrifice: 11...e5! 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♗xe5+ ♗f7, and the white king, stuck in the centre, will be exposed to a dangerous attack.

- | | |
|----------|-----|
| 11 ♖d2 | 0-0 |
| 12 0-0-0 | ♗c7 |

After castling in different directions the players usually carry out pawn-storms on opposite wings; each tries to be the first to weaken the enemy king's cover. From this point of view, the moves 12...b5 13 g4 b4 would appear logical. Then, however, White replies 14 ♘a4! ♖d6 15 g5, and 15...♘h5? is bad on account of 16 ♘e5. Hence, before beginning the pawn attack, Black must make a preparatory move to fortify his position in the centre. **Control of the centre must not be forgotten even when conducting sharp flank attacks.**

- | | |
|-------|--------|
| 13 g4 | b5 (D) |
|-------|--------|

Of course, taking the g-pawn was unthinkable.



W

Now, a question: what would you play if you had White here?

With the kings on opposite flanks you must play as energetically as you can, and try to seize the initiative at all costs. In such situations the slightest delay tends to be fatal.

The principle itself is perfectly clear, but its implementation is sometimes anything but simple. Here, for example, the attempt to undermine the opponent's centre with 14 f5?! exf5 15 g5 fails against 15...♘e4 16 ♘xd5 ♗f7.

To me, the sharp continuation 14 g5! ♘h5 15 ♘e5! seems correct. Acceptance of the pawn sacrifice is then extremely dangerous: 15...♘xf4 16 ♖xf4 ♗xf4 17 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 18 ♗h5 (18 ♗hf1!?) 18...g6

19 ♖xg6 hxg6 20 ♗xg6+ ♕h8 21 ♜xd5.

Tamaz Georgadze must have been worried about the reply 15...g6!, leaving the f-pawn patently weak. **In sharp situations with the kings castled on opposite wings, you often have to make positional or material concessions for the sake of the initiative. Don't be afraid of this.** White continues 16 ♜xc6 ♗xc6 17 ♜e4! ♔d4, and then either burns his boats with 18 h4, with a view to 18...♜xf4?! 19 ♖xf4 ♜xf4 20 ♜f6+ ♖xf6 21 gxf6 ♜xf6 22 h5, or else plays the more restrained 18 ♜d1!?, intending 19 ♜g3.

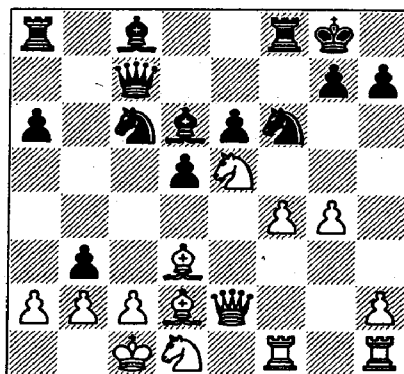
14 ♜d1!?

This might seem a sensible move – White fortifies his f-pawn in good time, and frees d1 as a retreat-square for his knight. However, even such a slight hesitation on White's part is enough to let Black launch his onslaught first.

I will take this opportunity to quote what Alexander Kotov said about mutual attacks against the kings on opposite flanks. He considered this maxim very important: "Bear in mind that a pawn-storm is in the nature of a forced variation, and that when launching it you have to calculate it just as precisely as you would a combination."

I disagree with Kotov here. It is true that in such cases the result of the battle may hang by a hair – it may depend on every tempo. Calculating variations plays an important role – but not the central one. It helps in solving particular problems, but usually (as in the present game) it does not enable you to foresee the exact outcome of the attack you are undertaking. For that reason it doesn't pay to become obsessed with calculating, and you cannot of course confine yourself to it entirely. It is important to have a feel for the position – to form an intuitive assessment of this or that course which events may take – and to gauge the prospects offered to either side.

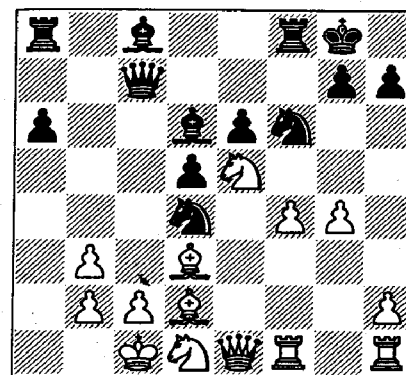
14 ... ♜b4
15 ♜d1 ♔d6
16 ♜e5 ♜b3! (D)



W

Much stronger than crudely capturing on e5, which would lead to unclear play. Black accomplishes his main strategic task – weakening the pawn protection in front of the enemy king.

17 axb3 ♜d4
18 ♗e1 (D)

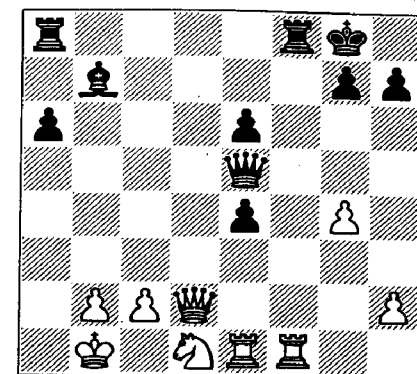


B

Here I made what was probably my one serious mistake in the game – after a long think I accepted my opponent's offer of a draw (½-½). Mistakes like this need analysing; you have to clarify why they occur. The reasons may be purely technical, or psychological, or sometimes a mixture of both.

First, a reason that can be explained on the chessboard. From working out the variations, I concluded that the position after 18...♜xb3+ 19 ♖b1 ♜xd2+ 20 ♗xd2 ♖xe5 21 fxe5 ♗xe5 22 ♜e1

♜e4 23 ♖xe4 dxe4 24 ♜hf1 ♖b7 (D) was most likely to arise.



W

Black has an extra pawn but it is doubled, and the white knight is ready to occupy the excellent blockading square e3. I wasn't convinced that I had the advantage here, and couldn't find anything better. So I took the draw.

Do you see where the mistake was? It was in my assessment of the end position. I didn't take the weakness of f3 into account (if White had a pawn on g2 the position would indeed be unclear). As soon as the knight goes to e3, Black's rook will occupy the f3-point. From there it will exert unpleasant pressure on the opponent's position, since an exchange on f3 would be quite hopeless for White.

Of course it all seems obvious when you look at the diagram, but

during the game it is quite possible to miss something at the end of a long variation. Still, is it worth making excuses? What is more important is to think how to avoid such mistakes in future.

When analysing, you may sometimes be unable to visualize the positions very clearly. (Some sectors of the board may get excluded from your field of vision; you forget the exact locations of particular pieces, etc.) In that case, special training methods are called for. Get into the habit of analysing positions that interest you without moving the pieces; go over games in books or magazines without using a board; play blindfold chess with your friends.

Now for the psychological aspect of my error. At that time I was a young and inexperienced player. I was playing (on the junior board) in the same team as such illustrious figures as Mikhail Botvinnik and Vasily Smyslov. Understandably, I was very nervous and afraid of letting the team down. Consequently I spent more time than usual on examining and re-examining the variations, so that at the moment of concluding peace I had less than half an hour for the remaining 23 moves. Incidentally, after the game I showed Mikhail Botvinnik the final position and the possibilities I

had examined in it. After asking how much time I had left, the ex-World Champion said I was right to agree a draw.

It is clear all the same that a cool-headed, self-assured player would never have accepted the peace offer in such a position. It is essential to work at developing your resilience and toughness, your ability to keep your bearings in all circumstances – even the most complex ones – and not to be cowed by strong opponents. Without all this, you cannot expect major successes at chess.

An effort to play with redoubled accuracy and solidity at crucial moments is sometimes detrimental. You are being untrue to your usual programme of thought and behaviour, and this brings considerable danger. Why? Let me give you a simple analogy. None of you would have much difficulty walking along a tree-trunk that was lying on the ground. But if the same tree-trunk were placed across a chasm, you would be likely to fall off if you weren't prepared. On the ground, when there is no danger, our movements are to a large extent automatic; they are sufficiently well guided by our subconscious. Above a chasm, the fear of falling makes us watch every step, we exert ourselves to avoid

putting a single foot wrong. In consequence, the natural harmony between conscious and subconscious is destroyed. It is always more difficult to act according to an unaccustomed programme.

Bronstein – Dvoretsky
USSR Championship
(First League), Odessa 1974
French Defence

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	Qc3	Qf6
4	e5	Qfd7
5	f4	c5
6	Qf3	Qc6
7	dx c5	Qxc5
8	a3?!	

In my view this move is anti-positional. Let me explain why:

1) In the opening the pieces must be developed quickly, without wasting time on relatively insignificant pawn moves.

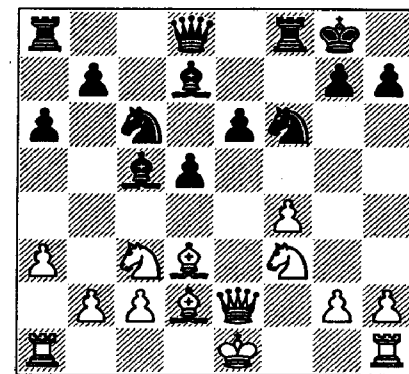
2) Kingside castling has been made difficult for White, but if he castles long, the advanced position of his a-pawn will help his opponent to open lines for the attack. It is **highly dangerous to castle on opposite wings if there are any defects in the pawn cover in front of your king.**

White wants his bishop to feel comfortable on d3, with no worries

about the black knight coming to b4. However, this is achieved at too great a cost.

8	...	0-0
9	Qd3	f6
10	exf6	Qxf6
11	W e2	a6
12	Qd2	Qd7 (D)

I didn't hurry to advance my b-pawn, as I didn't want White to be 'scared off'. In answer to 12...b5 he would surely have played 13 Qd1.



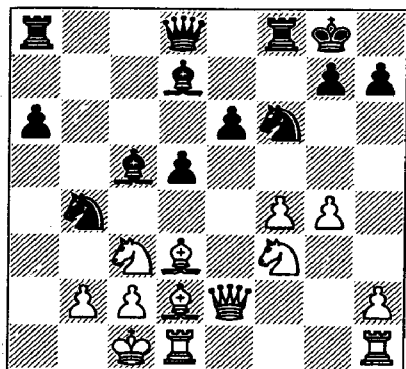
W

13	0-0-0?!	b5
14	g4	b4
15	axb4	Qxb4 (D)

The shortcomings of a2-a3 are now obvious. Black has opened lines on the queenside and gained the advantage.

16 g5?!

Pawn advances often create weaknesses in your own camp. It



W

is worth it if you obtain a strong attack in return – but if the attack fails, the weaknesses will make themselves felt. In this case it is clear that Black will be doing all the attacking, so why weaken the pawn on f4?

16 ... Qxd3+

The immediate 16...Qh5 is also playable, since the bishop sacrifice on h7 is not dangerous.

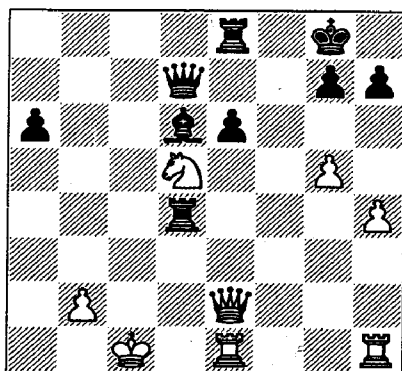
17 cxd3

If 17 Wxd3 Qh5, then 18 Qxd5 (or 18 Qe2) fails to 18...Qb5. On 18 Qe5, Black has 18...Qxf4 19 Qxf4 Rxf4, and this time 20 Qxd5 fails to 20...Rd4.

17 ... Qh5
18 d4 Qd6
19 Qe5 Qxf4
20 Qxf4 Rxf4
21 h4 Wc7
22 Qxd7 Wxd7
23 Rde1 Re8!

Of course Black is not content to simplify into an ending with 23...Rxd4 24 Wxe6+ Wxe6 25 Rxe6 Qf4+ 26 Qb1. His advantage is much more significant in the middlegame.

24 Qxd5 Rxd4 (D)



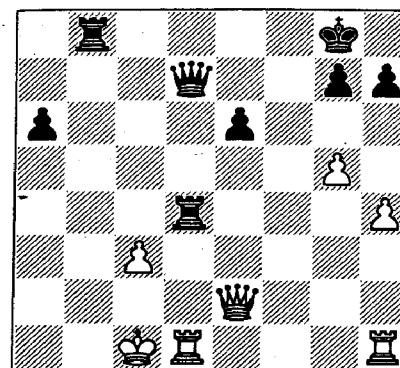
W

25 Qc3 Qf4+
26 Qb1 Qd2
26...Rd2 27 We4 Rb8 looks tempting, but after 28 Wxf4 I couldn't see a way to deliver mate.
27 Rd1 Qxc3
28 bxc3 Rb8+
29 Qc1 (D)

Quite a simple little poser: what is the most precise way to continue the attack?

I didn't want to exchange a pair of rooks. To avoid it, there is quite an easy tactical ploy.

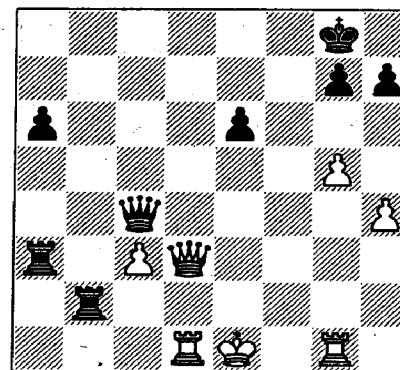
29 ... Wc6!
30 Wc2 Ra4



B

31 Rhg1 Ra3
32 Qd2 Wc4
33 Wd3 Rb2+
34 Qe1 (D)

Or 34 Qe3 Rxc3. Now an exchange on d3 followed by a check on the back rank would pick up a rook, but the move I played leads to a forced mate.



B

34 ... Wxh4+

35 Wg3
35 Rg3 Wh1+ 36 Wf1 We4+.
35 ... We4+

0-1

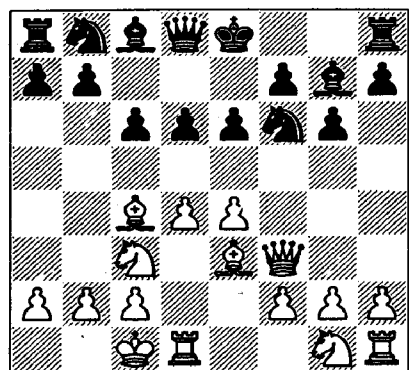
Even great chess players have bad days when they play below their usual strength. Evidently, for David Bronstein this was one of those days – which made it easier for me to win.

Let us look at one more 'light-weight' game.

Mariasin – Dvoretzky
Kiev 1970
Pirc Defence

1 e4 g6
2 d4 Qg7
3 Qc3 c6
4 Qc4 d6
5 Wf3 e6
6 Qe3
6 Qf4 and 6 Qge2 have also been played here.
6 ... Qf6
7 0-0-0 (D)
7 ... b5?!
8 Qxb5! 0-0
8...cxb5? 9 e5 is hopeless for Black.

I freely confess that I didn't sacrifice the pawn – I just blundered it away. Hence my seventh move deserves its question mark. The exclamation mark is added because



B

Black does nonetheless acquire some positional compensation (although certainly not enough) for the lost material. With the kings castled on opposite sides, it is very important to start your attack first. To speed up the opening of lines near the enemy king, it may be worth sacrificing a pawn.

In the next phase of the game my opponent's play was noticeably unsure, and the advantage gradually passed to me.

9 ♖a4 ♜c7

10 h4

It was worth considering 10 g4, intending 11 g5 ♘h5 12 ♘ge2 followed by 13 ♘g3.

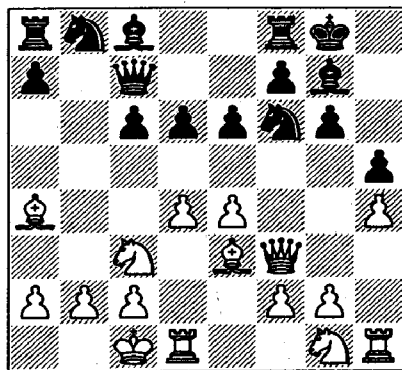
10 ... h5! (D)

11 ♖g5?! ♘h7

12 ♖e3 ♘d7

13 g4 hxg4

14 ♜xg4 ♘df6



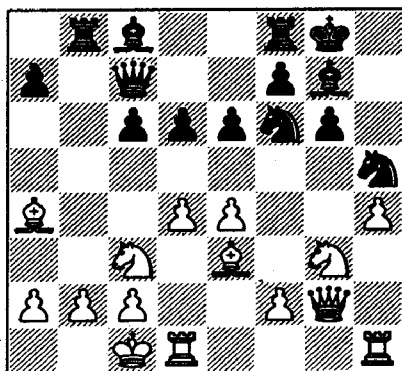
W

Of course Black cannot allow h4-h5 – the h-pawn has to be solidly blockaded. When preparing an offensive on one flank, don't forget the essential prophylactic measures on the other.

15 ♜g2 ♘h5

16 ♘ge2 ♜b8

17 ♘g3 ♘7f6 (D)



W

18 ♘xh5?

White is hoping to break the blockade by bringing his other knight to g3, but there is no time for this. A stronger move was 18 ♖g5, aiming for 19 ♖xf6 ♘xf6 20 h5.

18 ... ♘xh5

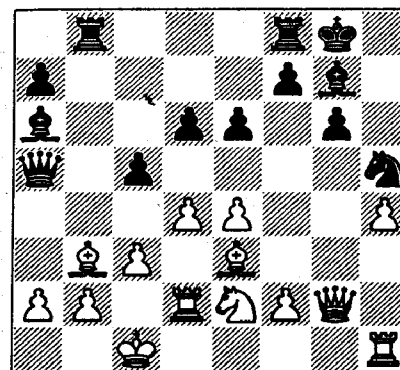
19 ♘e2 c5

20 c3?! ♜a5

21 ♖b3 ♖a6

22 ♜d2 (D)

How should Black continue the attack?



B

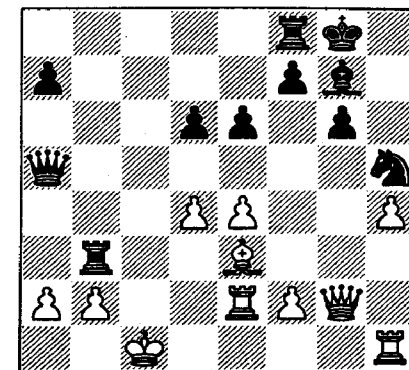
Going for the a-pawn is dubious: 22...c4?! 23 ♖c2 ♜xa2 24 ♖b1 (this is why White played 22 ♜d2 – the b2-pawn is now defended) 24...♜a1 25 ♘g3. White threatens to go over to the attack himself, e.g. after 25...♘g3 26 fxg3!, with h5 to follow. It is just possible that the line 25...♜b3!? 26 ♘xh5 ♜fb8 27 ♘d1!? ♜xb2 28

♖e2 ♜xb1 29 ♜xb1 ♜xb1 30 ♘xg7 would turn out in Black's favour, but this is too complicated. Anyway, why close any lines on the queenside, when Black has an immediate chance to do the very opposite?

22 ... ♖xe2!

23 ♜xe2 cxd4

24 cxd4 ♜xb3! (D)



W

Such sacrifices don't need to be calculated. It is clear that all the winning chances are now with Black.

25 axb3 ♜a1+

26 ♘d2 ♜xb2+

27 ♖e1 ♜a1+

28 ♘d2 ♜b2+

29 ♖e1 ♜xb3

30 ♜d2 ♜c8

31 ♖e2

White wants to consolidate with ♖f3, ♜f1 and ♖g2. However, in

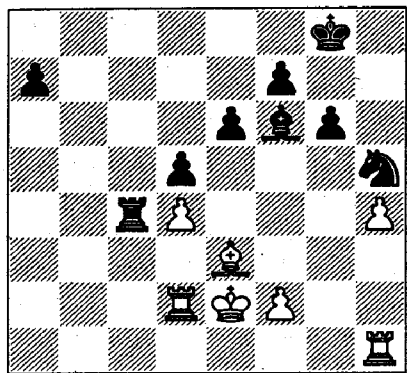
the meantime I succeeded in breaking up his centre.

31 ... ♖c4+!
32 ♔f3

If 32 ♖d3, then 32...♙xd4!. If White plays instead 32 ♔e1, Black has 32...♖b5! (simply threatening to push the a-pawn) 33 ♖f1 ♖b1+ and 34...♖xe4.

32 ... d5
33 e5 ♙xe5!
34 ♖f1 ♙f6
35 ♖xc4 ♖xc4
36 ♔e2? (D)

He had to play 36 ♖a1 with the idea of doubling rooks on the seventh as soon as possible. Now Black wins without any trouble.



B

36...♙g7 37 ♖a1 ♙f5 38 ♖xa7 ♙xd4! 39 ♖a8+ ♔g7 40 ♙f4 ♙c3 41 ♖d3 ♖xf4 42 ♖xc3 ♙xh4 43 ♖c7 g5 44 ♖aa7 ♔g6 45 ♖d7 ♙f5 46 ♖ab7 f6 47 ♖b8 ♙d4+ 48 ♔e3

♔f5 49 ♖f8 e5 50 ♖xd5 ♖f3+ 51 ♔d2 ♖xf2+ 52 ♔e3 ♖f3+ 53 ♔d2 ♔e4 54 ♖d7 g4 55 ♖g8 f5 56 ♖e8 ♖a3 57 ♖de7 ♙f3+ 0-1

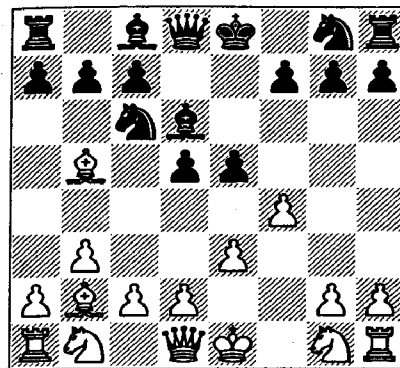
Pawns attacking the opponent's king position cannot give mate on their own. The purpose of a pawn-storm is to open lines for the pieces – for the queen and rooks first and foremost, though sometimes it is the minor pieces that play the key role in an attack.

The hero of the next game is my dark-squared bishop. After occupying the long diagonal as early as move two, it never makes any more moves. Yet its influence on events is enormous.

Dvoretsky – Khramtsov
Moscow 1970
Nimzowitsch/Larsen/Simagin
Attack

1 b3 e5
2 ♙b2 ♙c6
3 e3 d5
4 ♙b5 ♙d6
5 f4 (D)

Of course Black must not be allowed to maintain his powerful pawn centre unopposed. The break on the other wing with c2-c4 looks like a quieter line; the riskier move I played had, however, brought me success in some previous games.



B

5 ... ♖e7

On 5...f6, I intended 6 ♖h5+! (inducing Black to weaken the long diagonal) 6...g6 7 ♖h4.

6 ♙f3 ♙g4

After 6...f6!?, the win of a pawn is hazardous: 7 fxe5?! fxe5 8 ♙xc6+ (8 ♙xe5? ♙xe5 9 ♙xc6+ ♔d8! is thoroughly bad for White) 8...bxc6 9 ♙xe5 ♖h4+ (9...♙xe5? 10 ♖h5+) 10 g3 ♖h3 (better than 10...♖e4 11 0-0!) 11 ♖e2 ♙f6, and Black has a dangerous attack. However, after the correct 7 0-0, the black centre remains vulnerable.

7 h3

I have also happened to play this position with Black. My opponents always opted for 7 fxe5 ♙xe5 8 ♙xe5 ♙xf3 9 ♖xf3 ♖xe5 10 ♙c3 ♙f6 11 0-0 0-0. Objectively the chances are about equal, but this doesn't mean a draw is

unavoidable. Success will go to the side that plays more constructively.

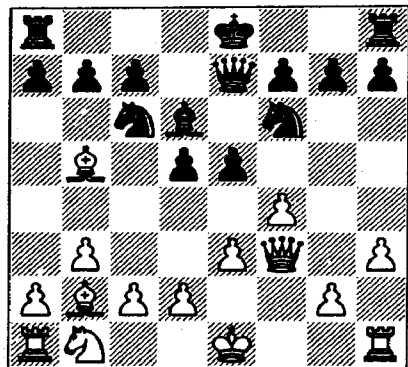
The game Semeniuk-Dvoretsky, Sverdlovsk 1987 continued 12 ♖h3 ♔e7!? 13 ♙d3?! (13 ♖f4! is better) 13...♔e4! 14 ♔e2 f5, and Black seized the initiative.

Alanakian-Dvoretsky, Moscow 1971 went 12 ♙xc6!? bxc6 13 a4? (13 ♖f4) 13...a5 14 ♖f5 ♖fe8 (14...♖d6) 15 ♖ae1 ♖ad8 16 ♖e2 c5 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖ef2 c6 19 ♖f5 ♖de8 20 h3 ♖e7 21 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 22 ♖f4 ♔f8 23 g4 ♔e7, with a good endgame for Black.

7 ... ♙xf3
8 ♖xf3 ♙f6 (D)

In Dvoretsky-Makarov, Moscow 1971, Black went wrong with 8...e4? 9 ♖g3 f6 10 ♙c3 ♖f7 11 ♙xd5!. There followed: 11...0-0-0 (11...♖xd5 is answered by 12 ♙c4, and then 12...♖h5 13 ♖xg7 or 12...♖g5 13 ♖xg5 fxg5 14 ♙xg7) 12 ♙c4 ♖d7 13 0-0-0 a6 14 ♖g4 ♙a5? 15 ♙b6+! 1-0.

How original would you say the position in the next diagram was? I was astonished to discover that the well-known theoretician Vsevolod Rauzer had discussed it several decades earlier, when annotating his game with Black against Viacheslav Ragozin in the 1936 Young Masters' Tournament in Leningrad. Rauzer indicated that after 9



W

0-0 exf4 10 exf4 0-0 11 ♖xc6 bxc6 12 ♘c3 ♜fe8 the chances are on Black's side; he recommended 9 g3 with approximate equality. I think 9 ♘c3!? is also worth looking at.

9 f5?!

A highly committal continuation. I sensed how risky it was, but wanted to force my opponent into as complex and unconventional a struggle as possible. At the end of the day my thinking paid off.

9 ... e4
10 ♖f2 h5

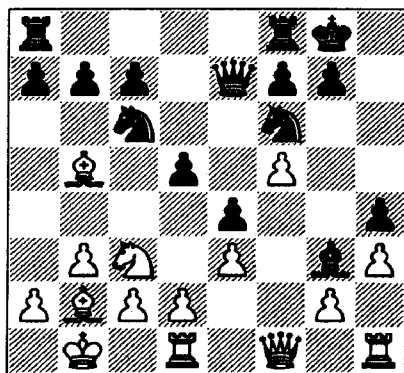
White would like to castle queenside. Therefore the most unpleasant move for him to meet is 10...♗h5!, forcing him to castle short. Admittedly, after 11 0-0 the attempt to clamp down on the kingside immediately with 11...♗g3 is refuted by 12 f6!, but instead 11...0-0-0, for example, is not bad.

11 ♘c3

I also thought about 11 g3 h4 12 gxh4, but decided it was too compromising.

11 ... h4
12 0-0-0 ♗g3?!
13 ♖f1 0-0
14 ♜b1 (D)

Now what would you play with Black? To answer this question, it helps to think about the intention of my last move.



B

I came close to exchanging a few pieces: 14 ♖xc6 bxc6 15 ♗e2 ♗e5 16 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 17 ♖f4. After 17...♖xf4 18 ♗xf4 White has the better ending. Unfortunately this idea doesn't work because of the mate on a1, but after 14 ♜b1 Black has to reckon with it.

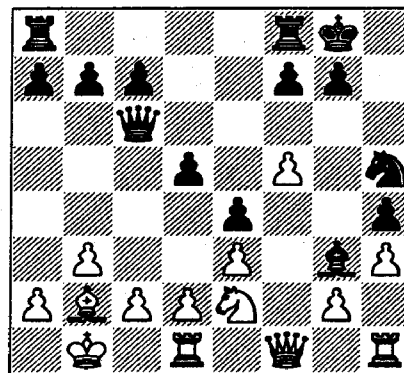
After the text (14 ♜b1) I recommend 14...a5!, an aggressive and prophylactic move which disrupts

White's plan. Then 15 ♖xc6?! bxc6 16 ♗e2 ♗e5 17 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖f4 is met by 18...♖e7! 19 a4 (19 ♖xh4 a4) 19...♜fb8, and the white king is in trouble.

14 ... ♖c5?

A major positional error. Black must always be ready to meet ♗e2 with a bishop exchange on e5, but now he lacks that possibility. In consequence, the b2-bishop acquires formidable power.

15 ♖xc6 ♖xc6
16 ♗e2 ♗h5 (D)



W

17 f6!

Stronger than 17 ♗xg3 ♗xg3 18 ♖f4 f6! (but not 18...♗xh1? 19 f6 with lethal mate threats).

17 ... g6

I didn't even consider Black's acceptance of the pawn sacrifice. On 17...♗xf6 White would have the pleasant choice between:

a) 18 ♗xg3 hxg3 19 ♖f4 (or 19 ♖f5).

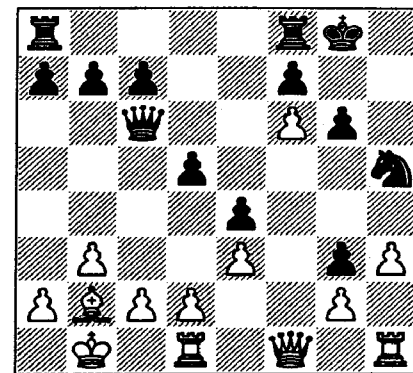
b) 18 ♗d4 (aiming for 19 ♗f5).

c) The crude 18 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 19 ♖xf6 gxf6 20 ♗xg3 hxg3 21 ♜hf1.

If Black had taken the pawn I would have had to choose between the above lines, but there was no sense in wasting time on the decision in advance.

18 ♗xg3 hxg3 (D)

Not, of course, 18...♗xg3 19 ♖f4.



W

19 ♖e2!

White has the advantage, but breaking down his opponent's defence is not so simple. On the kingside Black has built something like a fortress. If White plays ♜hf1 with the idea of ♜f5!, Black replies ...♖e6, and the rook has no entry squares on the f-file. White can transfer his queen via g4 to g5,

threatening to penetrate on h6, but the threat will be parried by ...♔h7. White would have to open up a 'second front' by undermining his opponent's centre with d2-d3 at a suitable moment.

19 ... ♖xf6?

Khramtsov makes my task much easier. In such situations greed is entirely out of place.

20 ♖df1 ♖h5

21 ♖f5!

21 ♖g4 would be a mistake on account of 21...f5 22 ♖g5 ♖f7.

After the text-move the threat is 22 ♖xh5 gxh5 23 ♖xh5 f6 24 ♖g6+ ♔h8 25 ♖f1.

21 ... f6

White has two strong replies to 21...♖g7: 22 ♖g5 and 22 ♖f6 ♖d7 23 ♖hf1.

22 ♖g4 ♔f7

23 ♖xh5

This obvious exchange sacrifice was hard to resist. However, 23 ♖hf1 might have decided the game even more simply.

23 ... gxh5

24 ♖xh5+ ♔e7

24...♔g7 25 ♖f1 is wholly bad for Black. A more stubborn defence is 24...♔e6, which I intended to answer with 25 ♖g4+ (25 ♖f1!?) 25...f5 26 ♖g6+ ♔d7

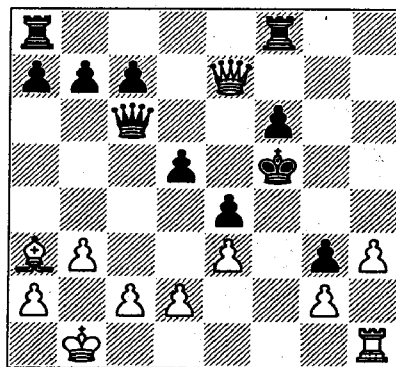
27 ♖g7+ ♔e6 28 h4!. Black then has nothing with which to oppose the advance of the h-pawn; the entire board is under fire from the bishop.

25 ♖a3+ ♔d7

Again 25...♔e6 was more tenacious.

26 ♖h7+ ♔e6

27 ♖e7+ ♔f5 (D)



W

28 ♖g7!

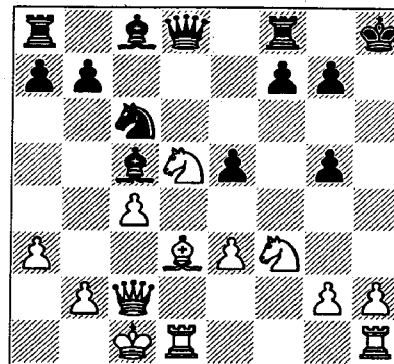
More precise than 28 ♖f1+ ♔g6 29 ♖f4 f5 (or 29...♖fe8).

28 ... ♖fe8

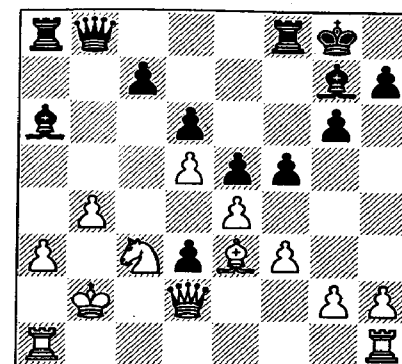
29 ♖f1+ 1-0

To conclude, I suggest you try to find the best continuation in the following positions with the kings on opposite sides.

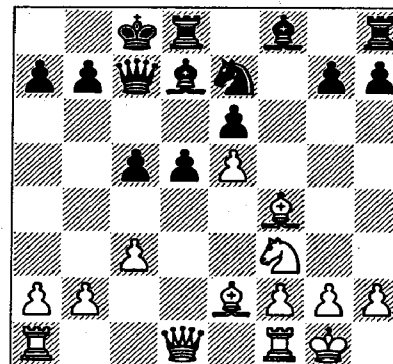
Exercises



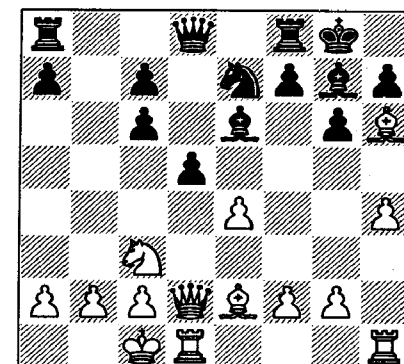
1. White to move



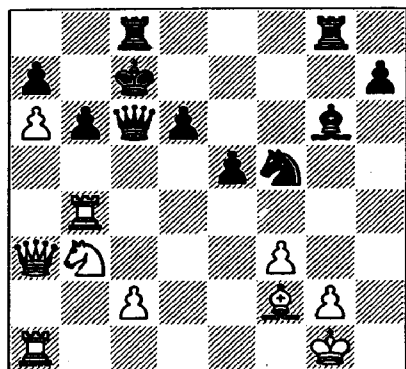
3. White to move



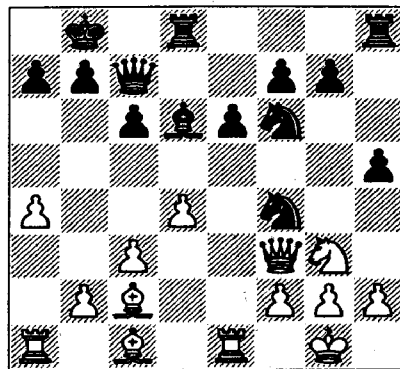
2. Black to move



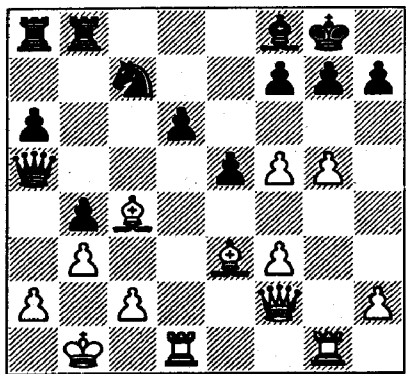
4. Black to move



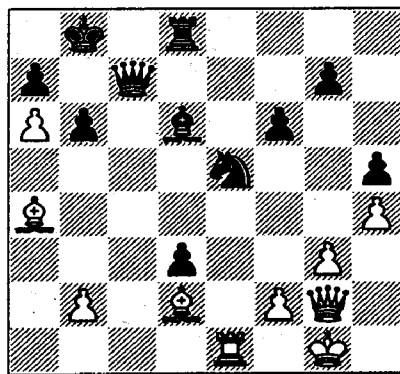
5. White to move



7. White to move



6. Black to move



8. Black to move

Solutions are given on pages 276-81.

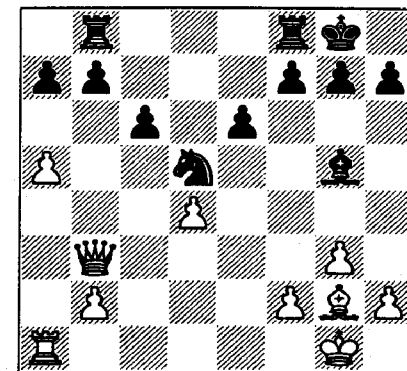
12 Training Session: Making Difficult Choices

Igor Belov

A large number of the moves we play require no deep investigation of the position. It is enough to apply some standard principles of evaluation and add just a few variations. Nevertheless, in nearly every game a moment of crisis is bound to occur (sometimes several such moments arise); at that moment the right decision cannot possibly be found on the surface – and yet it determines the whole future course of the struggle, perhaps its very outcome.

It is some situations of this kind, arising from my own games, that I want to bring to your attention. In conditions of limited thinking time, try to solve the problems that confronted me. We will then compare our conclusions.

Let us start with the relatively (only relatively!) simpler examples, and end with those that are highly complex, almost unfathomable.



W

Belov – Vaulin
Katowice 1991

Exercise 1. In this position there is an unusual balance of material. Who is playing for a win? How should White continue?

Rook, knight and pawn are worth about the same as a queen, but here Black is better off positionally. There are no weaknesses for White to fasten onto, whereas Black threatens to work up pressure against the

weak d4-pawn. White can have no high ambitions.

The most precise way to equalize was pointed out by Ilia Makarev.

1 ♖xd5! cxd5

If 1...exd5 then 2 ♜e1 or 2 ♜c3 a6 3 ♜e1.

2 ♜d1 ♜fc8

[Black can improve with 2...b6, with a view to 3 a6?! b5 followed by 4...♜b6 or 4...b4. However, after 3 axb6 ♜xb6 4 ♜c3 in conjunction with 5 ♜a1, White seems to be out of danger. – Dvoretsky]

3 ♜d3!

The rook heads for c3. In some lines White may even seize the initiative. The side with the queen should seek exchanges! The queen's power is easier to exploit when there are fewer pieces opposing it – the chances of breaking into the opponent's camp are increased.

Peter Svidler devised a different route for the rook (after 1 ♖xd5 cxd5): 2 ♜b4?! ♜fc8 (2...♜fe8 3 h4 ♖e7 4 ♜d2 and 5 ♜c1) 3 ♜a3. This is too artificial. Try to implement your plans in the simplest and most reliable way, or you risk missing something, which is just what Peter did: 3...♜c4! 4 ♜d6 ♜d8.

[Once you have clearly grasped that it is imperative to bring the rook to the c-file, you may even

consider a pawn sacrifice after 1 ♖xd5 cxd5: 2 h4 ♖f6 3 ♜c1! ♖xd4 4 ♜c7. However, after 4...b6 or 4...b5 White still has problems, so I think the manoeuvre ♜a1-d1-d3-c3 is more convincing. – Dvoretsky]

All other plans are weaker. Maxim Boguslavsky, for example, suggested 1 ♜c4 threatening 2 a6. Black replies 1...a6, and what now? Does White exchange on d5? There is something illogical about that, since Black recaptures with tempo. Vasia Emelin took the analysis further: 2 ♖xd5 cxd5 (2...exd5 3 ♜b4 and 4 ♜e1) 3 ♜c7 ♜fc8 4 ♜d6 ♖f6 5 ♜d1. The queen is active, of course, but White has had to postpone the exchange of rooks.

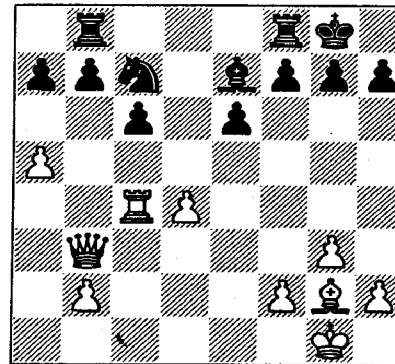
An idea of Inna Gaponenko's is questionable: 1 a6 bxa6 2 ♜c4. The black rook comes into play at once on the b-file; the bishop will try to get at the white d-pawn and attack f2.

In the actual game, I am afraid I missed my way in this position too. I understood that I had to aim for exchanges, and considered 1 ♖xd5. However, I didn't see the rook manoeuvre to c3; I only looked at 1...cxd5 2 h4 ♖f6 3 ♜e3. Then 3...♜bc8! (threatening 4...♜c4) is strong; if 4 ♜c1, Black has the reply 4...♖xd4!.

1 ♜a4? ♖e7!

Black of course prevents 2 ♖xd5 and 3 ♜b4. Even so, it was not too late to take on d5, but I decided to occupy the c-file with my rook first.

2 ♜c4?! ♖c7! (D)



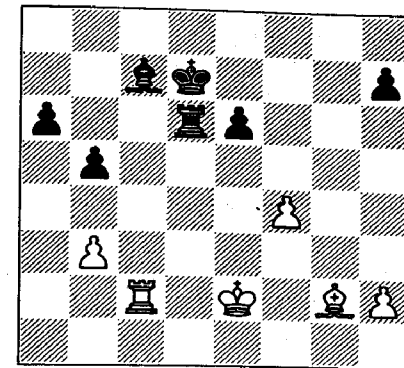
W

Alas, this simple move escaped me completely. With the retreat of the knight, White is suddenly in trouble. My opponent is planning a multiple attack against d4. He has more pieces than I have, so the pawn is essentially defenceless. I can only hope for some random tactical counterchances.

3 ♖e4 ♜fd8 4 ♜d3 h6 5 ♜e3 ♖f6 6 ♖c2 a6!

Before placing his knight on b5, Black does well to prevent the advance a5-a6.

7 ♖a4 ♖b5 8 ♖xb5 axb5 9 ♜b4 ♜a8 10 ♜f4 ♜d7 11 ♖g2 ♜ad8, and Black won.



W

Kamshonkov – Belov
Podolsk 1991

Exercise 2. The game had been adjourned. This is the position after Black's sealed move ...♖a5-c7!, which came as a surprise to White.

Recollect the positional principles that operate in situations like this, and with their help, select a plan of defence for White.

There are opposite-coloured bishops on the board. It would help to exchange rooks and go into a 'pure' bishop ending, but unfortunately that is not feasible at present.

When defending an endgame with a material disadvantage, you should exchange pawns. This is a useful rule. Are any other general considerations relevant?

Many years ago I attended a lecture by Dvoretsky on bishops of opposite colours, and from that time on I have thoroughly absorbed the chief principles for playing these endings. One of the rules he formulated says: **"The stronger side should keep its pawns on the squares of the same colour as those on which the opponent's bishop moves; the weaker side should place its pawns on the colour of its own bishop."** In accordance with this rule, though in time-trouble, I had not hesitated to arrange my pawns on light squares (there was a choice between a7/b6 and a6/b5). My opponent's king-side pawns, by contrast, are on the 'wrong' squares and therefore vulnerable. All the same, **opposite-coloured bishop endings have a strong drawish tendency**, and in my adjournment analysis I found a forced draw for my opponent. I had hopes that he wouldn't find it, though, since he didn't know my sealed move and the saving line was not entirely obvious.

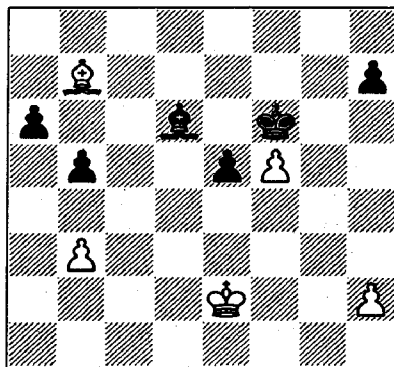
Diana Darchia suggests 1 ♖h3, to prepare f4-f5. Correct! We either exchange pawns or else force ...e5, when the white f-pawn will be on the 'right' square and the black e-pawn on the 'wrong' colour, that of its own bishop. The chances of a successful blockade

are increased. I am glad to say that half the students in the contest sized up the position correctly and made the same choice.

- 1 ♖h3! ♔d8
1... ♞d5 2 ♖xe6+.
2 f5 e5
3 ♞d2!?

The rook exchange leads to a forced draw; 3 ♖g2 is not bad either.

- 3 ... ♔e7
4 ♞xd6 ♖xd6
5 ♖g2 ♔f6
6 ♖b7! (D)



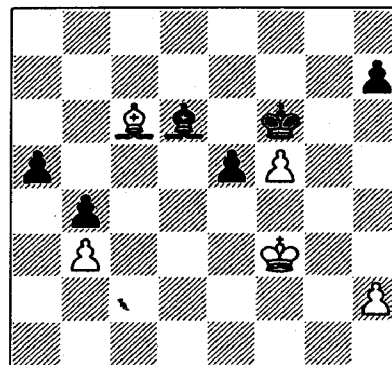
B

On the queenside too, it is important to drive Black's pawns onto the same colour squares as his bishop. You see how easy it is to play good moves, once you know the principle.

- 6 ... a5
7 ♖c6! b4

8 ♖f3! (D)

Simplest. I analysed a sharper continuation: 8 ♖e4 ♖g5 9 ♖f3 ♖h4 10 f6 h6 11 f7 ♖h3 12 ♖f5+ ♖xh2 13 ♖g4, and no matter what I tried, I could find no win here either.



B

- 8 ... ♖g5
If 8... ♖xf5, then 9 ♖e4+ and 10 ♖xh7.

- 9 ♖e4 ♖c7
10 ♖d7

By now the game is obviously a draw.

In the plan of defence we have examined, an idea characteristic of opposite-colour bishop positions is consistently implemented, namely the correct arrangement of the pawns. Of course, a practical game is not a study, and there may be various possible ways of handling the position. All the same, when

you are at a disadvantage, precision and accuracy are called for, and not all methods of defence are of equal worth. For instance, 1 ♖e3 looks tempting, depriving Black's rook of d4 and aiming to meet 1... ♖b6+?! 2 ♖e2 ♞d4 with 3 ♞d2 or 3 ♞c6. However, Black has the unpleasant reply 1... ♞d1 (and if 2 ♖e4, then 2... ♞e1+ winning another pawn).

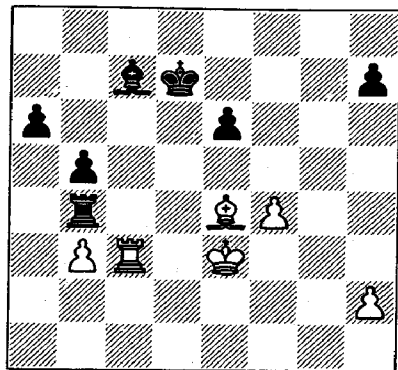
Sasha Chernosvitov and Inna Gaponenko recommend 1 ♞c5. Why? Is the idea to attack the h7-pawn? I would surrender it with pleasure if I could get at the b3-pawn. My answer would be 1... ♞d4 2 ♞h5 ♖xf4 3 ♞xh7+ ♖d6. Or if 2 f5, then 2... ♖xf5 3 ♞xf5 ♞b4 4 ♞f7+ ♖d8. After 5 ♞xh7 ♞xb3 White is hard put to survive, but otherwise he comes out two pawns down (5 ♞f3 ♖xh2; 5 ♖d5 ♞h4).

[A good defensive idea was found by Grandmaster Evgeny Bareev: 1 ♞c3!? (threatening 2 ♞h3) 1... ♞d4 2 ♖b7!. For example, 2... ♖xf4 3 ♖xa6 b4 4 ♞d3 with a draw. The same idea can be carried out a little differently: 1 ♞c5 ♞d4 2 ♖b7!. In this connection it is worth recalling another principle for defending opposite-bishop endings: *attack your opponent's pawns with your bishop.* – Dvoretsky]

Ilakha Kadymova suggested 1 ♖e4. This is just what my opponent played, and no good came of

it; the black pieces immediately sprang to life.

1 ♖e4? ♜d4 2 ♚e3 (2 ♖b7!?)
2... ♜b4 3 ♜c3 (D)



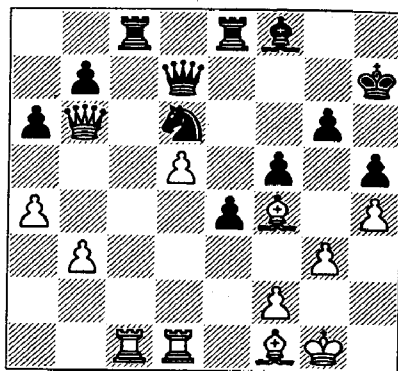
B

3...h5

Better than 3...h6 – the stronger side should not place pawns on the same colour squares as its bishop. The position is now difficult for White, as his pieces are tied down to the defence of his weak pawns. This is a suitable moment to recall another important principle.

If there are other pieces on the board apart from the opposite-coloured bishops, you must on no account remain passive; you have to seek counterplay and fight for the initiative at all costs.

4 h3 ♖b6+ 5 ♚f3 ♖d4 6 ♜d3 ♚e7 7 f5 e5 8 ♖d5 ♚f6 9 ♖e6 a5 10 ♜d2 e4+! 11 ♚e2 a4 12 bxa4 bxa4, and Black won.



B

Lempert – Belov
Katowice 1990

Exercise 3. Who is better here?
How should Black continue?

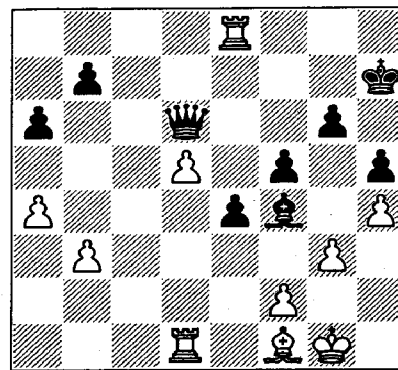
Unfortunately, two students were unable to come to any conclusion at all. Vladimir Baklan suggested a move which never came into my head: 1...e3. His idea looks highly dubious, for instance 2 fxe3 ♜e4 3 d6 ♜xc1 4 ♜xc1 ♖xd6 5 ♜d1 ♜e6 6 ♖c4 ♜f6 7 ♖e5.

1 ... ♖h6!

If Black manages to exchange the strong f4-bishop without a serious mishap, his position will be preferable.

However, if you only looked at 2 ♜xc8 ♜xc8 3 ♚c7, your move was superficial. The real test of Black's idea is 2 ♚xd6! ♚xd6 3 ♜xc8. If then 3... ♚f8?! 4 ♜c7+ ♚h8 (not

4... ♜e7 5 d6 ♜xc7 6 dxc7 ♖xf4 7 ♜d8) 5 ♖xh6 ♚xh6 6 d6, the advantage is with White. Black has to play 3... ♖xf4! 4 ♜xe8 (D).



B

Peter Svidler reached this position in his analysis, and judged it to be in White's favour. Without the bishops on the board, this would certainly be the right verdict – the two rooks combined with the dangerous passed d-pawn are stronger than the queen. A bad line is 4... ♚d7? 5 gxf4! ♚xe8 6 d6 ♚d7 7 ♖c4 followed by 8 ♖e6, and White wins.

It was Emelin who calculated furthest – he gave 4... ♖xg3!. After 5 ♜e6, Black has 5... ♚c5 or 5... ♖xf2+. We need to look at 5 fxxg3 ♚xg3+ 6 ♖g2. What happens now?

6...e3? is anti-positional; after 7 ♜f1 Black's pawns are blocked. But

one recommendation, 6... ♚xb3!?, is very interesting. Where is the rook to go? Black's chances here are not at all worse.

I admit I only examined 6...f4!? 7 ♜xe4 f3 8 ♜d2 fxxg2. Then 9 d6 is answered by 9... ♚h3 10 ♜xg2 ♚d3 11 ♜e7+ ♚h6 12 ♜e6 ♚d4+, with a draw. White might try 9 ♜e2!?, so as to keep a rook on the d-file, but even this is unclear.

We can now give an objective assessment of the starting position. Black has some problems to solve, but after 1... ♖h6! he is justified in expecting to save the game.

Let us now look at how the actual game went. Hardly giving it a thought, my opponent exchanged rooks.

2 ♜xc8?! ♜xc8

3 ♚c7 ♜d8

3... ♜e7 is not bad either.

4 ♜c1 ♖xf4

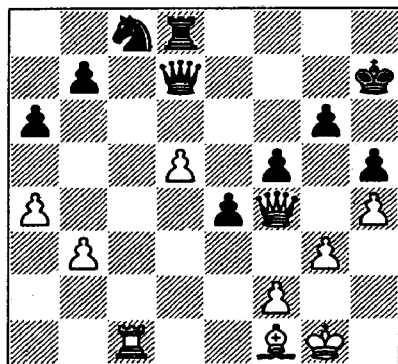
5 ♚xf4?! (D)

The line 5 ♚xd7+ ♜xd7 6 ♜xc8 is sounder; White would certainly not lose the resulting opposite-coloured bishop ending.

5 ... ♜d6

6 ♚e5

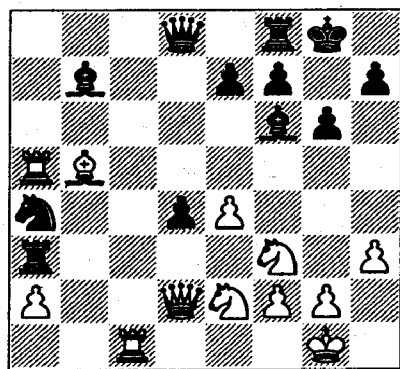
Here my opponent offered a draw, but I refused. Black's pawns are excellently placed, confining the enemy bishop. The 'Nimzowitsch knight', blockading the passed d-pawn, is very strong.



B

6 ... ♖e8
7 ♜d4 ♖e7
8 ♜b6 ♖f7
9 ♙h3 ♜e7
10 ♜c5 ♜e5

Black has an undoubted plus. Unfortunately I later blundered twice, and let the win slip.



B

Yachmennik – Belov
Smolensk 1989

Exercise 4. My opponent's last move, 1 ♙d3-b5, has set me no easy problem – that of rescuing the pinned a4-knight. Your task (like mine during the game) is:

- to evaluate the position;
- to find various ways of playing the black side, and supply the essential variations;
- to select the most promising line.

As to the evaluation, opinions varied. "White's better" – "White's worse" – "It's equal". The students nearly all observed that 1... ♖xf3? fails to 2 ♖xa4!. They suggested 1...d3!?, some of them without giving any analysis. Three moves were analysed:

a) Many of them gave the variation 2 ♖xa4 ♖xa4 3 ♙xa4 dxe2 4 ♜xe2 ♜a8. Black wins his pawn back and gains the advantage.

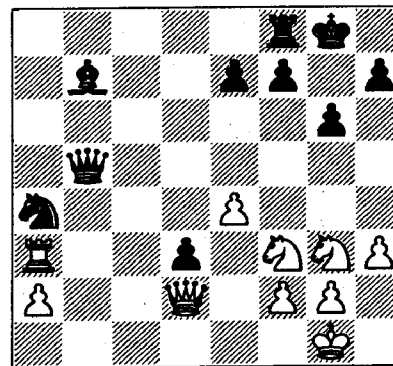
b) After 2 ♙f4:

b1) Svidler analysed 2... ♙c3! 3 ♖xc3 ♜xa5, when after 4 ♖xa3 ♜xb5, the e4-pawn is under attack.

b2) Instead Baklan suggested a line giving up two pieces for a rook: 2... ♙b2 3 ♖xa4 ♖xa4 4 ♙xa4 ♙xc1 5 ♜xc1 ♜a5. This is an ingenious idea, but we already know that there is no need for it; 2 ♙f4 is more strongly answered by 2... ♙c3!.

b3) [In addition, White has to reckon with 2... ♙xe4!? 3 ♖xa4 ♖xa4 4 ♙xa4 e5. – Dolmatov]

c) Only Makariev examined 2 ♙g3!, but he stopped after 2... ♙c3! (the idea suggested by Baklan with the knight on f4, 2... ♙b2 3 ♖xa4 ♖xa4 4 ♙xa4 ♙xc1 5 ♜xc1 ♜a5, is bad for Black here; White plays 6 ♙b3, with the terrible threat of ♜h6 and ♙g5) 3 ♖xc3 ♜xa5 [the pretty counter-stroke 3... ♖xa2 would lead to equality in the case of 4 ♜xa2? ♙xc3 5 ♜a1 d2; unfortunately it is refuted by the pro-saic 4 ♖xa4! ♖xd2 5 ♙xd2 – Dolmatov]. Actually the variation needs to be continued: 4 ♖xa3 ♜xb5 (D) and now:



W

c1) 5 ♖xd3 is poor due to 5... ♙c5.

c2) 5 ♜xd3 ♜xd3 6 ♖xd3 ♙c5 and here:

c21) 7 ♖e3 ♖a8 [In fact after 7... ♙d8! it is not at all easy for White to exploit his material plus; his opponent's pieces are just too active. – Yusupov] 8 a3 ♖a4 9 ♙d2 is a possibility.

c22) 7 ♖d4 ♖a8 8 ♖c4 ♖a5 9 ♙d4. Analysing this far, I saw that I was a pawn down with a difficult position. [Black can regain the pawn with 9... ♙xe4. After 10 ♙xe4 (10 ♙b3 ♖e5) 10... ♙xe4 11 ♙b3 ♖e5 12 f4 ♖e6 13 ♖c8+ ♙g7 14 ♙c5 ♖c6 15 ♖xc6 ♙xc6 we reach a drawn ending. The conclusion is that 1...d3!? gives excellent saving chances. – Yusupov]

c3) [As Grandmaster Bareev has shown, instead of taking the d3-pawn White has the strong intermediate move 5 ♖b3!. After 5... ♜a6, he continues not with 6 ♜h6?! f6 but with 6 ♖xd3 ♙c5 7 ♖d8, maintaining a substantial plus, for example: 7...f6 (capturing on e4 would lose a piece) 8 ♖xf8+ ♙xf8 9 ♜d8+ ♙f7 10 ♜h8. – Dvoretsky]

Are there any other candidate moves in the diagram position? Vadim Zviagintsev mentioned 1... ♙c3 (though without giving any analysis). After 2 ♖xa3 ♙xb5 3 ♖b3 Black has no compensation for the exchange.

Weighing up the variations, I came to the conclusion that in the

normal course of events I was most likely to lose. I didn't want to reconcile myself to such a dreary fate, and kept on looking. Finally I succeeded in finding an amazing chance.

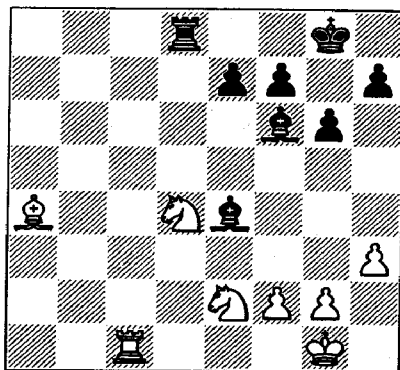
In principle, Black's position does have some good points – for instance the bishop-pair and a compact pawn-chain. The idea of constructing a fortress suddenly occurred to me...

[For my own part I would like to suggest one other idea: 1...♙xe4!? 2 ♖xa4 ♜xa4 3 ♙xa4 ♚a8 4 ♙b3 (or 4 ♙d1) 4...♙xf3 5 gxf3 ♚xf3. Without a doubt, the resulting position is in White's favour; his passed a-pawn may become extremely dangerous. But for the moment he has to worry about his shattered kingside and deal with Black's threat to advance the centre pawns. Frankly, this continuation seems to me more promising than what occurred in the game. – Dolmatov]

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1 ... | ♜xa2!? |
| 2 ♚xa2 | ♚xa5 |
| 3 ♚xa4 | ♚xa4 |
| 4 ♙xa4 | ♙xe4 |
| 5 ♙fxd4 | ♜d8 (D) |

Black has just one pawn for the sacrificed piece. Yet realizing White's advantage is not so simple. If 6 ♙f3 or 6 ♙b3, Black would continue with 6...♜a8, aiming to

penetrate with his rook to White's second rank.

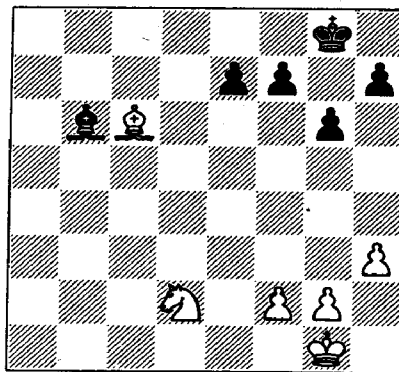


W

- | | |
|---------|------|
| 6 ♙c6?! | ♜d2 |
| 7 ♙c3 | ♙xc6 |
| 8 ♙xc6 | ♙d4 |
| 9 ♙e4 | ♜b2 |
| 10 ♜d1 | ♙b6 |

The threat is 11...f5.

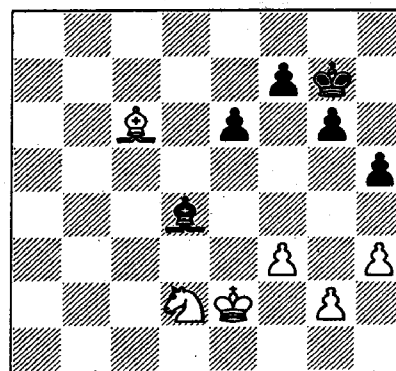
- | | |
|-------------|------|
| 11 ♜d2 | ♜xd2 |
| 12 ♙xd2 (D) | |



B

I had seen this position a long way ahead and judged it to be drawn. White's only object of attack is the f7-pawn, and I couldn't see how both his pieces could attack it at once – since the dark-square approaches would be defended by my king and bishop. Of course I was not totally confident of a favourable result, but I think that from the practical standpoint the decision I took was justified. I had a clear idea of how White was going to win in the lines where he had an extra pawn, whereas I could not imagine how he could succeed here.

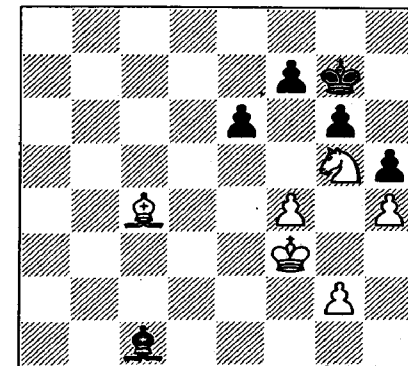
- | | |
|--------|--------|
| 12 ... | ♙d4 |
| 13 ♙f1 | h5 |
| 14 ♙e2 | ♙g7 |
| 15 f3 | e6 (D) |



W

In this position the game was adjourned. Analysis confirmed that

my assessment of the position was right. On resumption, there was later on an interesting episode:



W

My opponent tried 1 f5!?. After the end of the game he pointed out that even 1...exf5!? 2 ♙xf7 ♙f6 would leave him with no chance of success. As usual, the drawing potential of opposite-coloured bishops is immense!

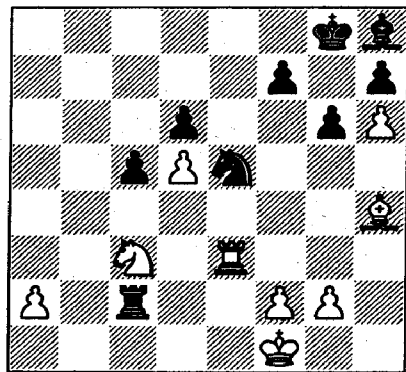
The game continuation also led to a draw: 1...gxf5 2 ♙b5 ♙xg5! 3 hxc5 ♙g6 4 ♙f4 e5+! 5 ♙xe5 ♙xg5 6 ♙d3 f6+ 7 ♙e6 f4 8 ♙e2 ♙h4.

What main conclusion follows from the example we have just examined?

When defending a difficult position, it pays to consider the most implausible resources, to have faith in yourself and boldly transform the character of the

fight. Your opponent is most likely to cope successfully in a standard position that is technical in nature (with an extra pawn, for instance). It is much harder for him in a position with an unconventional line-up of forces – here the probability of error greatly increases.

Incidentally, having found this difficult and unexpected defensive idea, I not only saved half a point but experienced a huge emotional boost, thanks to which I began winning game after game.



B

Mitiaeov – Belov
Moscow 1989

I had had a winning position, but with the onset of the endgame I weakened and completely forgot about the possibility of getting mated.

Exercise 5. White threatens f2-f4; how does Black resist? At first I thought I was in a very bad way, but then...

Sergei Movsesian decided on 1...f8. This is no good! Nearly everyone gave the variation 2 e4 c4 3 b3 with advantage to White, and Svidler continued 3...b2 4 b2 b2 5 f6!. I don't know if he saw the counter-stroke 5...d2+, but it doesn't change the assessment of the position. I thought that in place of 2 e4, a more natural move was 2 b5 (why should White block the e-file?). For example, 2...xa2 3 dxd6 a6 4 b3 d7 5 c4 with a clear plus. However, after 2...c4 3 e7+ e8 (3...g8 4 e1) 4 dxd6+ dxd6 5 dxd6+ d7 6 f8 f6 (or 6...d4 7 e7+ d8) the outcome still remains unclear. Evidently the knight's move to e4 is stronger after all.

Emelin found nothing better than 1...f6 2 f4 d7, but he rightly assessed the position as difficult for Black.

An ingenious idea (in the spirit of the preceding game) was devised by Zviagintsev: 1...f5 2 f4 f7!? 3 fxe5 fxe5. However, after 4 e1 I doubt if Black has real compensation for the sacrificed piece. In any case, White doesn't

have to take the knight – 3 b5! is very strong.

There is one more possibility to consider.

1 ... g5!
2 e4xg5

But what now? Chernosvitov rightly observed that the exchanging combination 2...xf2+ 3 xf2 d4+ 4 f3 dxe3 5 fxe3 fxc3 leads to a hopeless ending for Black after 6 f4.

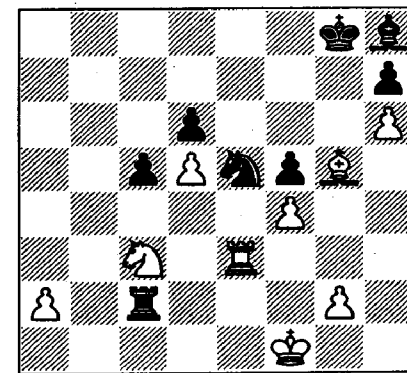
Most of the participants restricted themselves to the modest 2...f6 3 e4 f7 (3...d6 4 b5! dxe4 5 e8+ f7 6 dxd6+ g6 7 xh8 is scarcely any better). How do we rate the ensuing position? According to Svidler and Makariev it is unclear, perhaps a shade more comfortable for White. Well, compared with me they are great optimists. I thought the position was hopeless. White has an extra pawn, and the h8-bishop has no moves. Let us look at a specific line: 4 e4 c4 5 b3? f5 6 b7+ g6 – here, without a doubt, excellent counter-chances arise. White cannot play 7 dxd6 dxd6 8 b6 f5. But why should he go into the complications at all? I think 5 c3!, as suggested by Dvoretsky, throws cold water on Black's hopes. After 5...xc3 (5...d2+ 6 e2) 6 dxc3 he probably wins back the h6-pawn, but how can he stop the

outside passed a-pawn and at the same time avoid losing his d6-pawn?

Let us look more closely at White's main threat of f2-f4. This move may win the game, yet in itself it is anti-positional. The second rank is suddenly weakened, and the activity of White's bishop is reduced. Can't Black somehow make use of all this, and organize a counter-attack against the enemy king?

2 ... f5!
3 f4 (D)

[As Bareev pointed out, 3 b5!? was also strong, while the attempt to exclude this possibility by inverting the move-order – 1...f5 2 f4 g5 – doesn't work in view of 3 fxe5! gxh4 4 exd6. – Dvoretsky]



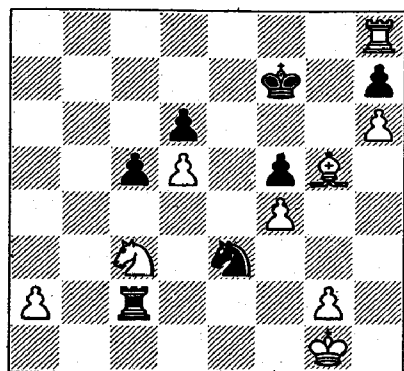
B

3 ... d4
4 e8+ f7

5 $\text{R}x\text{h}8$ $\text{Q}e3+$

5... $\text{R}xc3$ is hopeless in view of 6 $\text{R}x\text{h}7+$ $\text{Q}g8$ 7 $\text{R}g7+$ $\text{Q}h8$ 8 $\text{R}d7$ $\text{R}c2$ 9 $\text{Q}e1!$?, with $\text{R}xd6$ to follow.

6 $\text{Q}g1$ (D)



B

If Black now takes the knight, the advanced white h-pawn decides the game: 6... $\text{R}xc3$? 7 $\text{R}x\text{h}7+$ $\text{Q}g6$ 8 $\text{R}g7+$ $\text{Q}h5$ 9 $\text{h}7$. There is no improvement in 6... $\text{Q}g4$? 7 $\text{R}x\text{h}7+$ $\text{Q}g6$ 8 $\text{R}g7+$ $\text{Q}h5$ 9 $\text{Q}d1!$ $\text{R}c1$ 10 $\text{Q}f1$.

6 ... $\text{Q}g6!$

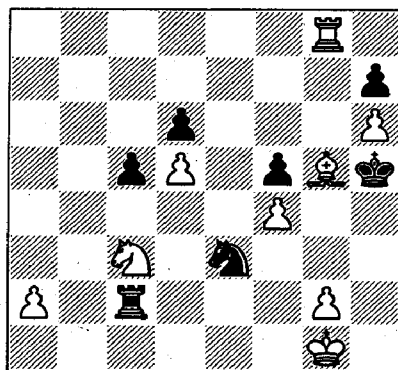
By now, the main strategic basis of Black's pawn sacrifice with ... $\text{g}5!$ is comprehensible. It was important to give the king some air and a path to freedom.

7 $\text{R}g8+$

In answer to 7 $\text{Q}b5!$? I was planning 7... $\text{R}xg2+$ 8 $\text{Q}h1$ $\text{R}xa2$ 9 $\text{Q}xd6$ $\text{Q}xd5$ 10 $\text{R}g8+$ $\text{Q}h5$, and if 11 $\text{Q}xf5?$, then 11... $\text{Q}g4!$ with

very unclear consequences, since the king jumps in at h3. Unfortunately, after 11 $\text{Q}d8!$ (Dolmatov), White wins after all. Maybe Black should try 7... $\text{Q}g4$ 8 $\text{g}3$ $\text{Q}h2$ (but not 8... $\text{R}c1+$ 9 $\text{Q}g2$ $\text{R}c2+$ 10 $\text{Q}f1$ $\text{Q}e3+$ 11 $\text{Q}g1$) 9 $\text{R}e8!$ (preparing $\text{R}e3$, so as to destroy the well-known drawing mechanism ... $\text{R}d2$ and ... $\text{Q}f3+$) 9... $\text{Q}h5!$ followed by 10... $\text{Q}g4$. White would need to tread carefully, though with correct play his position would still probably be won.

7 ... $\text{Q}h5$ (D)



W

8 $\text{Q}b5?$

My opponent thought for about fifteen minutes here, but still failed to find the right solution. He was clearly very keen to hang on to all his extra material. However, if he wanted to go after the d6-pawn, it was more logical to do it a move

earlier, without driving the black king forward.

The move I feared most was 8 $\text{R}g7$, as I couldn't see what to do about the powerful h-pawn. For example: 8... $\text{R}xg2+$ 9 $\text{Q}h1$ $\text{R}c2$ 10 $\text{R}xh7$ $\text{R}xc3$ 11 $\text{R}e7$ $\text{Q}g4$ 12 $\text{h}7$ $\text{Q}g3$ (12... $\text{Q}f3$ 13 $\text{R}xe3+$!) 13 $\text{Q}h4+$!. Dvoretsky found a defence, however: 8... $\text{Q}g4!$ 9 $\text{g}3$ (9 $\text{Q}f1$ $\text{Q}e3+$) 9... $\text{R}xc3$ 10 $\text{R}xh7$ $\text{R}c1+$ 11 $\text{Q}g2$ $\text{R}c2+$ 12 $\text{Q}f1$ $\text{Q}e3+$ 13 $\text{Q}g1$ (Black has the same answer to 13 $\text{Q}e1$) 13... $\text{Q}g4!$ 14 $\text{R}e7$ $\text{Q}f3$ (threatening 15... $\text{R}c1+$ 16 $\text{Q}h2$ $\text{Q}g4+$) 15 $\text{R}xe3+$ $\text{Q}xe3$ 16 $\text{h}7$ $\text{R}c1+$ 17 $\text{Q}g2$ $\text{R}c2+$ 18 $\text{Q}h3$ $\text{R}c1$.

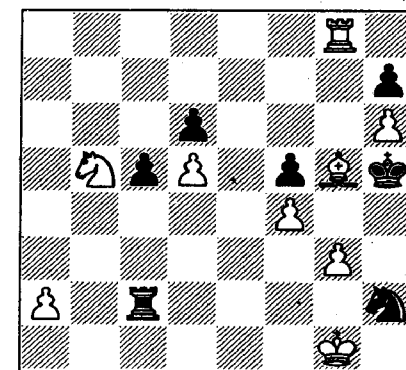
The black king isn't much more comfortable on the h-file than on the back rank. The attempt to play for mate with 8 $\text{Q}e7!$? looks inviting. If 8... $\text{R}xc3$ (reckoning on 9 $\text{R}g5+$ $\text{Q}h4!$ with unclear consequences), then the quiet move 9 $\text{g}3!$, found by Dolmatov, is decisive – the king cannot escape from the mating net. It follows that Black must defend with 8... $\text{R}c1+$ 9 $\text{Q}f2$ (9 $\text{Q}h2$ $\text{Q}g4+$ 10 $\text{Q}h3$ $\text{R}xc3+$ 11 $\text{g}3$ $\text{Q}f2+$ 12 $\text{Q}g2$ $\text{Q}e4$) 9... $\text{Q}g4+$ 10 $\text{Q}e2$ $\text{R}xc3$. There is, of course, not much joy here for Black, but he can still fight on.

Without doubt White's simplest method, and the most unpleasant one for his opponent, consisted in reaching a position with two pieces

against a rook – either in the previous line (with 10 $\text{R}xg4$ instead of 10 $\text{Q}e2$), or by 8 $\text{Q}f6!$? $\text{R}c1+$ (8... $\text{Q}g4$ 9 $\text{R}g5+$ and then 9... $\text{Q}xh6$ 10 $\text{Q}g7\#$ or 9... $\text{Q}h4$ 10 $\text{R}xf5+$ $\text{Q}g3?$ 11 $\text{Q}e4\#$) 9 $\text{Q}f2$ $\text{Q}g4+$ 10 $\text{R}xg4$ $\text{Q}xg4$ 11 $\text{a}4$. White should be able to realize his advantage, though there are still some technical difficulties to overcome.

8 ... $\text{Q}g4$
9 $\text{g}3$ $\text{Q}h2$ (D)

Black wants to construct the drawing mechanism I mentioned before: ... $\text{R}d2$ and ... $\text{Q}f3+$. An idea of Dvoretsky's also deserves to be studied: 9... $\text{R}c1+$ 10 $\text{Q}g2$ $\text{R}c2+$ 11 $\text{Q}f1$ $\text{Q}e3+$ 12 $\text{Q}g1$ $\text{Q}g4$, but assessing the consequences with inadequate thinking time would be difficult.



W

At this point White wasted most of his last few minutes looking for

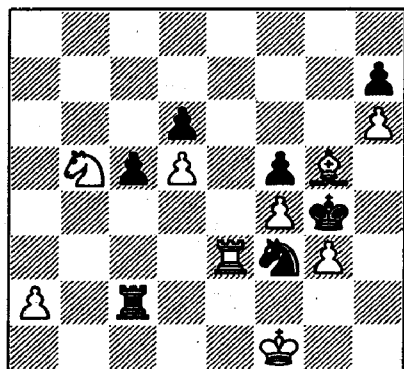
a forced win that is not there. He should definitely have settled for 10 ♖f6 ♜f3+ 11 ♜f1 ♞d2 12 ♞g5+ ♜xg5 13 fxg5 ♞xd5, when Black would still have had to defend accurately.

10 ♞e8?! ♜g4

11 ♞e3 ♜f3+

12 ♜f1?! (D)

12 ♞xf3 ♜xf3 leads to a draw.



B

My opponent's errors in the final stage of the game are easily explained. He considered the position won for White. He viewed my pawn sacrifice (1...g5) as desperation. The move 6...♜g6!, confusing the issue, came as a surprise to him. In severe time-trouble (which was mutual) he loses the thread, and even the game.

12 ... ♜xg3

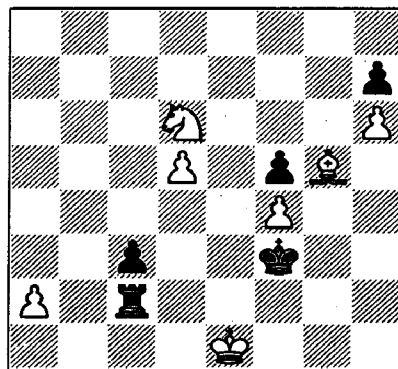
13 ♞xf3+ ♜xf3

14 ♜e1 ♜e3

15 ♜f1 c4!?

16 ♜xd6 ♜f3

17 ♜e1 c3 (D)



W

18 ♜xf5??

18 ♜d1 was essential, with a probable draw.

18 ... ♞c1#

(0-1)

From the practical point of view, the decision I took (1...g5 and 2...f5) was, I think, correct, even though analysis has revealed more than one refutation. As in the previous example, I wanted to deflect my opponent from a purely technical course – I endeavoured to 'randomize' the position and create active counterplay at any cost. For my opponent to find his bearings in the new situation, with mutual attacks and an unconventional distribution of material, proved far from simple.

In seeking a solution, you should not confine yourself purely to examining variations. General positional considerations often come to your aid too. In this case, for one thing, I was looking for a way to utilize the defects of f2-f4, and for another thing I was trying to let my king out of its cage.

Now let me announce how the

students performed. The best score was made by Svidler. Zviagintsev was second, and Emelin third. But then, they all made quite a good showing. I hope the experience gained from solving and discussing these exercises will be of some help to them at the board, where they are sure to keep encountering such tough problems.

13 Virtuoso Defence

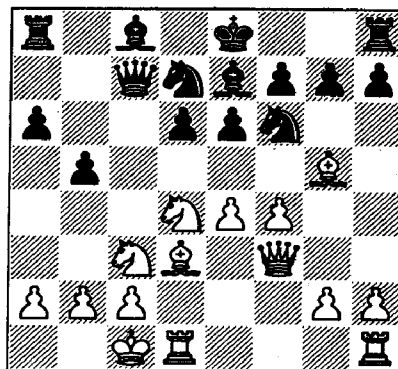
Mark Dvoretsky

While I was studying Grigory Sanakoev's collection of games (which we discussed in Chapter 8, *Thoughts about a Book*), the following exceptionally tense and fascinating duel attracted my attention. White worked up an extremely dangerous attack against the king and seemed certain of victory. Yet by cool defensive play his opponent not only managed to parry the immediate threats but even seized the initiative and eventually won. In such cases the cause of failure usually lies in errors in the conduct of the attack. Here, on the other hand, as shown by Sanakoev's analysis – which in places has been significantly refined and supplemented by the author of these lines and by Grandmaster Zviagintsev – it is practically impossible to fault White's play; the result was determined by Black's inspired defence.

Once again it is interesting to consider the contrast between correspondence and over-the-board play.

Sanakoev – Maeder
10th World Correspondence
Championship 1979-84
Sicilian Defence

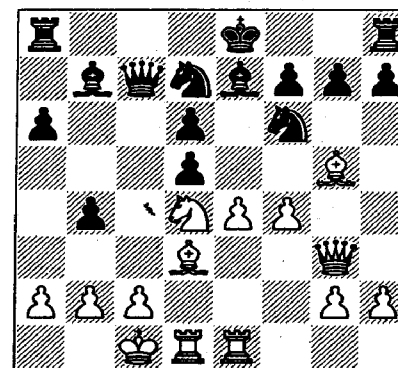
- | | |
|---------|--------|
| 1 e4 | c5 |
| 2 d4 | d6 |
| 3 d4 | cx d4 |
| 4 dxd4 | d f6 |
| 5 d c3 | a6 |
| 6 g5 | e6 |
| 7 f4 | e7 |
| 8 f3 | c7 |
| 9 0-0-0 | bd7 |
| 10 d3 | b5 (D) |



W

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| 11 h e1 | b7 |
| 12 g3 | b4 |
| 13 d5 | exd5 (D) |

13...dxd5 is a mistake in view of 14 exd5 dxd5 15 dxe6 dxe6 16 fxe6. 13...dxd5 is also bad: 14 exd5 dxd5 15 dxe7 dxe7 16 xg7 f8 17 fxe6! fxe6 18 dxe6, Chudinovskikh-Semionov, USSR 1974.



W

14 e5!?

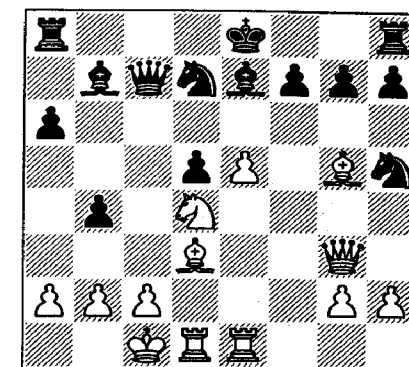
The main theoretical continuation is 14 exd5 d8, with unclear consequences.

- | | |
|---------|--------|
| 14 ... | dx e5 |
| 15 fxe5 | h5 (D) |

Not 15...d e4? 16 dxe4 dxe5+ 17 xg5 dxe4 18 f5 dxe5 19 d6+ f8 20 dxe5 dxe5 21 dxb7.

16 Wh4

The sharp try 16 e6?! is interesting. The cautious 16...dxe5+?! turns out clearly in White's favour

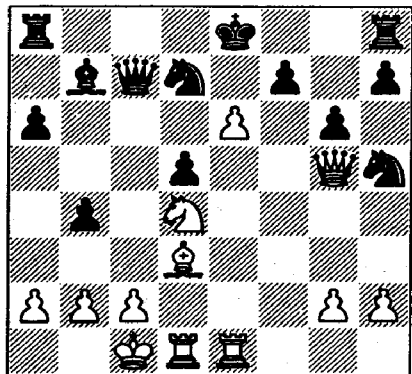


W

after 17 xg5 f4+ 18 f4 dxf4 19 exd7+ dxd7 20 f5+ d6 21 g3 d6 22 h3 d7 23 e3, or 17...d f6 18 exf7+ xf7 19 d6 d6 20 e2 g6 21 d h5 e8 22 g4 c8 23 f1 fxe6 24 dxe6+ dxe6 25 dxd5 (Lepeshkin). Black has to accept the queen sacrifice with 16...dxe5 17 exf7+ xf7 18 fxe7+ g8 19 hxg3 xg3 (19...d e5 20 f5) 20 d6 d e5. After 21 f1, Black should play 21...d f8!? 22 f5 c8 23 e8 f7 24 e7+ g8 25 e8, when the result is a draw (Lepeshkin). In the game Baluyev-Vadikan, correspondence 1976, Black instead played 21...d c5? and lost: 22 f5 d e4? (22...dxe6 23 dxe6+ dxe6 24 fxe6 h6 with advantage to White) 23 dxe4 dxe4 24 f6! xg5+ 25 dxe5 d5 26 xa6 1-0.

16 ... ♖xg5+
 17 ♔xg5 g6
 18 e6 (D)

Weigel-Hauernherin, correspondence 1977 saw instead 18 g4 ♘g7 19 e6 ♘c5 20 exf7++ ♔xf7.



B

Now 18... ♘df6 is hazardous, as after 19 exf7++ ♔xf7 20 ♖f1 the threat of 21 g4 is hard to meet.

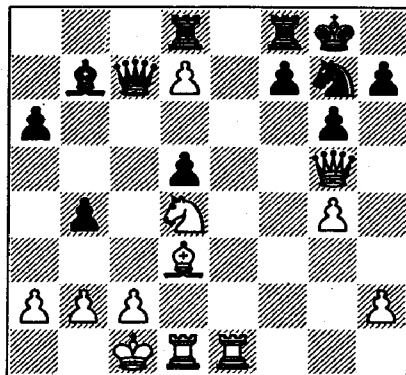
It certainly makes sense for Black to exchange queens by 18... ♔xf4+!? 19 ♔xf4 ♘xf4 20 exd7++ ♔xd7, as in the game Shakarov-Zhuravliov, correspondence 1976. After 21 ♖f1 ♘xd3+ 22 ♖xd3 f5 23 g4 White retains the better chances but Black's position is still defensible.

In two games in the 10th World Correspondence Championship, Maeder chose a different, riskier continuation:

18 ... 0-0?!

19 exd7 ♖ad8
 20 g4 ♘g7 (D)

Black has nothing better; after 20... ♔xf4+ 21 ♔xf4 ♘xf4 22 ♖e7, 20... ♘f4 21 ♖f5 (followed by ♖e7) or 20... f6 21 ♔h4 ♘g7 22 ♖e7 ♔xf4+ (22... ♖xd7 23 ♘e6) 23 ♖d2 ♔xd4 24 ♖xg6 ♔xd2+ 25 ♔xd2 hxg6 26 g5, his affairs are in a very bad state.



W

21 ♖f5!?

An attractive-looking move. Defending the d7-pawn temporarily, White intends to double major pieces on the h-file. The attempt to carry out this attacking manoeuvre at once is ineffective: 21 ♔h6 ♖xd7 (21... ♔xd7?! 22 ♖e3 ♔xg4 23 ♖e2! and 24 ♖h3) 22 ♖e3 ♘e6 23 ♖f5 (23 ♖h3 ♔xf4+) 23... ♘xd4 24 ♖xd4 ♖e7 (24... gxf5? 25 ♔g5+ ♔h8 26 ♔f6+ ♔g8 27 gxf5 and wins) 25 ♖h3 f6.

There was, however, another plan of attack which was evidently stronger; it involved pushing the h-pawn. The game Estrin-Maeder in the same tournament went 21 h4! ♖xd7 22 h5 ♔d6 23 ♔h6 ♖c8 24 ♖h1 ♘e8 25 ♖df1 ♖c7 26 g5 ♔e7 27 ♘c6!! ♖xc6 28 hxg6 f6 29 gxf6 ♖xf6 30 ♖fg1 ♖e6 31 gxh7+ ♔h8 32 ♔g5! 1-0.

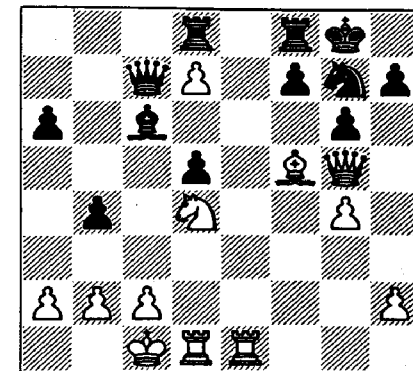
As the subsequent analysis will show (if it is correct, of course), White no longer has any advantage after the move played. However, to reach this conclusion in advance is quite impossible even in a postal game, let alone over the board.

21 ... ♖c6 (D)

The bishop is taboo; Black loses with 21... gxf5? 22 ♘xf5, or with 21... f6? 22 ♔h6 gxf5 23 ♖e7 ♖f7 24 ♖de1 ♖df8 (24... ♖xd7 25 ♖e8+) 25 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 (25... ♖xf7 26 ♖e8+ ♖f8 27 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 28 ♘e6+) 26 ♘xf5 ♘xf5 27 gxf5.

22 ♖d3!?

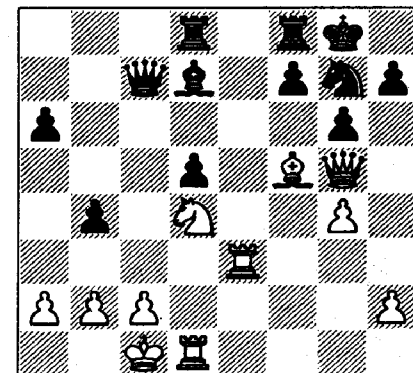
Which rook should go to h3? White's choice looks illogical, since after 22... ♖xd7 23 ♔h6 (or 23 ♖h3) Black will play 23... ♖fe8 with tempo: White will have to lose time removing his rook from e1. Sanakoev took this circumstance into account, of course, but after a deep study of the specific variations he nonetheless preferred the text-move. Later he concluded that



W

the move he played was a mistake after all, and that he should have played 22 ♖e3. From analysing the position together, Zviagintsev and I came to the opposite conclusion. I would point out once again that the truth here can only be established by analytical means; in practical play this is an insuperable task.

Let us look at the position arising after 22 ♖e3 ♖xd7 (D).



W

a) Now 23 ♖h6 seems indicated. Sanakoev gives these first three variations:

a1) 23...gxf5 24 gxf5 f6 25 ♖g1 (25 ♖e7 ♖f7 26 ♖e6 is met by 26...♖xf5!) 25...♖f7 (25...♖c8? 26 ♖h3) 26 ♖e6! ♖xe6 27 fxe6 ♖e7 28 ♖h3 is clearly better for White as Black must return the piece by 28...♖xe6 29 ♖xh7+ ♖f8 30 ♖h8+ ♖e7.

a2) 23...♖xf5 24 ♖h3 ♖h5 25 ♖xh5 gxh5 26 gxf5 ♖xh2 27 ♖f3.

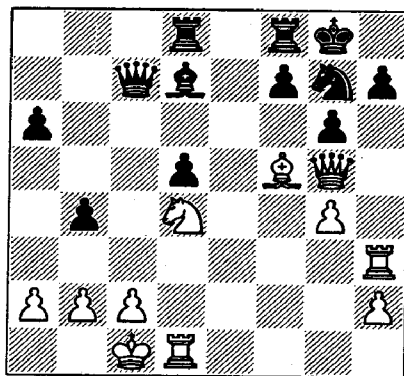
a3) 23...♖fe8 24 ♖h3 gxf5 25 ♖xh7+ ♖f8 26 ♖h8+ ♖e7 27 ♖xg7 fxg4 28 ♖f1.

a4) Black's best defence is to play 23...♖e6! (with the idea of 24 ♖h3? ♖f4+; 24 ♖xe6? fxe6).

a41) In the course of the game, Sanakoev thought that after 24 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 25 ♖xg6 fxg6 26 ♖xe6 ♖f4+ 27 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 the ending was level. Afterwards it occurred to him that the simple 25 ♖h3 guarantees White a very strong attack, for instance: 25...♖fe8 26 ♖xh7+ ♖f8 27 ♖h6+ ♖e7 28 ♖g5+, etc. This whole variation is of little importance, however, because it rests on the false assumption that after 24...fxe6 (instead of 24...♖xe6?) 25 ♖xg6, White wins. That is far from the truth; the obvious 25...♖c8 26 ♖h3 ♖d7 stems White's onslaught. Thus the exchange on e6 gives White nothing.

a42) Sanakoev wanted to play 24 ♖f1, with a view to the winning variations 24...♖xd4 25 ♖h3 ♖fe8 26 ♖xg6 and 24...♖fe8 25 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 26 ♖h3. Alas, there is a refutation: 24...♖c4!, and the f1-rook is *en prise*.

b) The attempt to reverse the move-order with 23 ♖h3 (D) (instead of 23 ♖h6) is interesting:



B

b1) If now 23...♖e6?, White plays 24 ♖xe6, answering 24...fxe6 not with 25 ♖xg6 ♖f4+ 26 ♖xf4 ♖xf4, but with 25 ♖xh7!. We have already seen that the variation 24...♖xe6 25 ♖h6 has dire consequences for Black.

b2) White also keeps a plus in the event of 23...h5?! 24 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 25 ♖h4.

b3) Yet with the rook on h3, Black is justified in accepting the piece sacrifice: 23...f6! (or 23...gxf5

24 ♖h6 f6!) 24 ♖h6 gxf5. The point is that Black meets 25 gxf5 by the simple 25...♖xf5, while after 25 ♖xh7+ ♖f7 the black queen obtains the important f4-square: 26 gxf5 (the threat was 26...♖h8) 26...♖f4+ 27 ♖b1 ♖xf5. Even after the relatively best 25 ♖f1 ♖e5!?, White's compensation for the sacrificed piece is plainly inadequate.

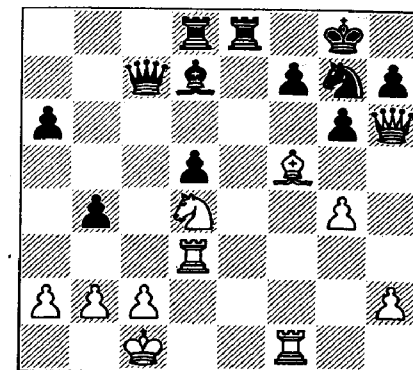
22 ... ♖xd7

23 ♖h6 ♖fe8

Black develops his rook with tempo, though once again 23...♖e6 deserved attention. White gets nowhere with 24 ♖h3 ♖f4+ or 24 ♖f1 ♖e5! (this time, of course, not 24...♖c4?). Winning back the pawn after multiple captures on e6 leads to equality. The thematic line is 24 ♖xe6 fxe6 (24...♖xe6? 25 ♖h3) 25 ♖h3! ♖c8 26 ♖xg6. An analogous position occurred in our analysis of 22 ♖e3, except that the white rook was then on d1. It is considerably better placed on e1, as becomes clear especially in the variation 26...♖d7?! 27 ♖xe6 (when 27...♖g7 fails to 28 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 29 ♖g6+). Black would have to reply 26...♖f4+ 27 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 28 ♖xh7+ ♖g7, but here too the advantage is with White.

24 ♖f1! (D)

What is Black to do now? White is threatening 25 ♖h3. There is no



B

point in 24...♖c4 because of 25 b3. Taking on f5 gives White a mating attack. In reply to 24...♖e5, Sanakoev had prepared quite a complicated combination: 25 ♖h3! ♖xd4 26 ♖xg6! ♖e6! 27 ♖xh7+ ♖f8 28 ♖d3 ♖e5 29 ♖e3 ♖d4 30 ♖f5 ♖d6 31 ♖d1 ♖c5 32 ♖e1 followed by 33 ♖h8+. White recovers the piece and obtains a decisive plus.

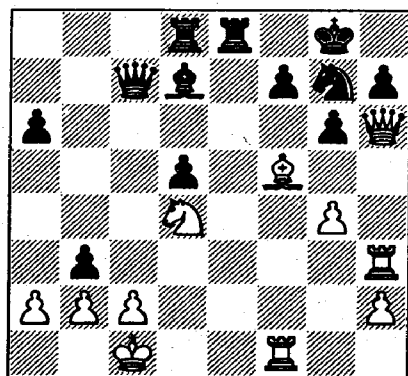
24 ... b3!!

A magnificent riposte! Any capture on b3 has its drawbacks. If 25 ♖xb3, then at worst Black has 25...♖b5 26 ♖c3 ♖xc3 27 bxc3 ♖xf1. If 25 axb3, there follows 25...♖a5 (threatening not only 26...♖a1+, but also 26...♖e1+) 26 ♖b1 ♖b5. In either case the initiative passes to Black. The right continuation was definitely 25 ♖xb3 ♖a5 26 c3, but even then, having repelled the immediate threats to his king (the rook can no longer

reach h3), Black obtains counter-chances.

25 ♖h3!? (D)

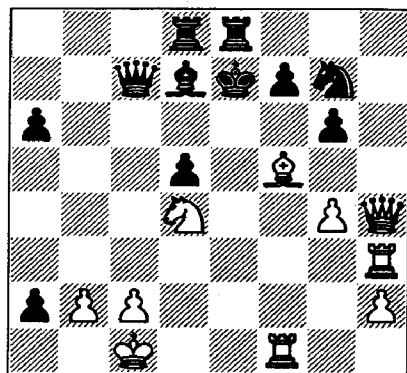
A brave decision! White breaks through on the h-file after all, but at a high price – the black pawn is on the verge of queening, though it may be possible to stop it with ♖a3 or ♘b3.



B

- 25 ... bxa2
26 ♖xh7+ ♘f8
27 ♖h8+ ♘e7
28 ♖h4+ (D)

This is the position Sanakoev was aiming for. He intended to answer 28...♘d6 with the simple 29 ♖a3, stopping the pawn and maintaining a strong attack. He was not afraid of 28...♘f8, if only because White can settle for a draw if he wants (29 ♖h8+ ♘e7 30 ♖h4+). He would also be justified in thinking about 29 ♖f6!:



B

a) After 29...a1♖+ 30 ♘d2 Sanakoev gives a beautiful variation leading to a won ending for White: 30...♖aa5+ 31 c3 ♘h5 32 ♖xh5 gxh5 33 ♖h6+ ♘e7 34 ♖e1+ ♘e6 35 ♘xe6 ♖xh2+ 36 ♖e2 ♖xe2+ 37 ♘e2 ♖d6 38 ♘f5+ ♘d8 39 ♘xd6 ♖xe6+ 40 ♖xe6 fxe6 41 ♘b7+. As a refutation of the attack, he gives 30...♖ca5+ 31 c3 ♖xb2+ 32 ♘c2 ♖bxc3+ 33 ♖xc3 ♖e7, but actually White wins in this line too: 34 ♖h4! ♘h5 (34...♘g8 35 ♖xe7) 35 gxh5 ♖c8 36 ♖f3.

b) Perhaps Black should try 29...♖f4+!? 30 ♖xf4 a1♖+ 31 ♘d2 ♖e1+ 32 ♘d3, and now not 32...♖d1+ 33 ♘c3 ♖c8+ 34 ♘b3, as indicated by Sanakoev (the king on the third rank can go to a2 to escape the checks), but 32...♘xf5+!. If 33 gxf5, White has to reckon with 33...♘h5, therefore he should play 33 ♖xf5 ♖d1+ 34 ♘c3 ♖e1+

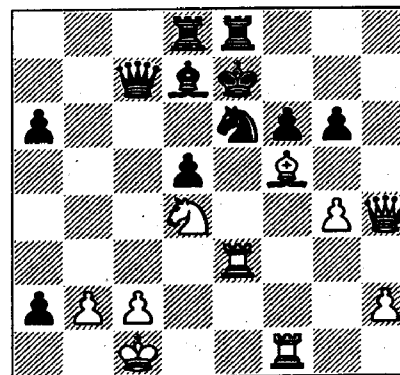
35 ♘b3. Black can choose between 35...♖b8+ 36 ♘a2 ♖a5+ 37 ♖a3 ♖xa3+ 38 ♘xa3 (38 bxa3) 38...gxf5, and 35...♖e3+ 36 ♖xe3 ♖xe3+ 37 ♘a2 – and then either 37...♖d7 or 37...gxf5. However, all these variations obviously favour White.

Unfortunately, Black has a much tougher defence at his disposal.

- 28 ... f6
29 ♖e3+ ♘e6!! (D)

29...♘e6 is weaker, for if (as in the game) there follows 30 ♘b3 ♖c4 31 ♘d3 ♖xb3 32 ♖xf6+, the g7-knight is *en prise*.

Black would lose with 29...♘f7? 30 ♘xg6+ or 29...♘f8? 30 ♘xg6! a1♖+ 31 ♘d2 ♖ca5+ 32 c3 ♖xb2+ 33 ♘c2.

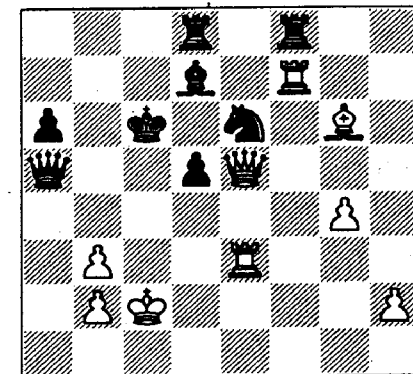


W

30 ♘b3

There are no combinations, so White must retreat.

- 30 ... ♖c4!
31 ♘d3 ♖xb3
32 ♖xf6+ ♘d6
33 ♖e5+ ♘c6
34 cxb3 a1♖+
35 ♘c2 ♖a5
36 ♘xg6 ♖f8
37 ♖f7 (D)



B

At this point White was still feeling optimistic. His pieces are very active, and his opponent's material plus is not too great. Sanakoev analysed the first three of the following variations:

a) 37...♖xf7 38 ♘xf7 ♘c5 (38...♘c7 39 ♖f6+ ♘b7 40 ♖xd8 ♖c5+ 41 ♖c3 and wins) 39 ♘xd5+ ♘b6 40 ♖d6+ ♘a7 41 b4 ♖a4+ 42 ♘b3 ♘xb3 43 ♖c7+ ♘a8 44 ♖xd8+.

b) 37...♖de8 38 ♖f6 d4 39 ♖e5! ♖d8 40 ♖xe6+! ♘xe6 (40...♖xe6 41 ♘e4+ ♘b6 42 ♖xd4+ ♘b5 43

♖c4+ ♜b6 44 ♚b4+) 41 ♙e4+ ♜c5 (41...♜b5 42 ♚b7+ ♜c5 43 ♜b4+ ♜c4 44 ♜b3#) 42 ♜b4+ ♜xb4 43 ♚b7+ ♜a5 (43...♜c5 44 ♚e5+ ♙d5 45 ♜b4+ ♜c6 46 ♙xd5+ ♚xd5 47 ♚c7#) 44 ♜b4+ ♜a4 45 ♜b2! and 46 ♙c2#.

c) 37...♙de8 38 ♚f6 ♚d8 39 ♙xe6+ ♙xe6 40 ♚c3+ and the black rook on f8 will be *en prise* after 41 ♚b4+.

d) An interesting defence was suggested by Vadim Zviagintsev: 37...♜b6!? 38 ♚d6+ ♙c6 39 ♚xe6 ♙de8! 40 ♚d6! (40 ♙xf8? ♙xe6 41 ♙xe6 ♚c5+; 40 ♙e7? ♙f2+ 41 ♜b1 ♙f1+ 42 ♜c2 ♚c5+) 40...♙xf7 41 ♙xe8 ♙f2+ 42 ♜b1 ♙f1+ 43 ♜c2 ♙f2+ with a draw.

However, Maeder found an even stronger continuation.

37 ... ♙c7!!

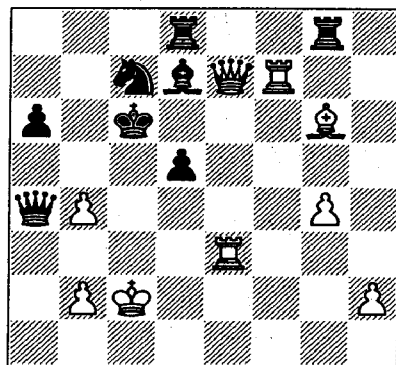
The f8-rook is defended indirectly: 38 ♚f6+ ♜b7 39 ♙xf8 ♚c5+. White has to forget his ambitious plans once and for all and start fighting for the draw. Nor is it clear how he can succeed.

38 ♚e7 ♙g8!

Again the most precise move. Black loses with 38...d4? 39 ♙e5 ♙d5 40 ♙xd5!, or with 38...♙h8? 39 ♜b4 ♙xh2+ 40 ♜b3. A roughly equal position would result from 38...♙xf7 39 ♙c3+ ♜b7 40 ♙xf7 ♙b5 41 ♙xd5+ ♜a7 42 ♜b4 ♚b6 43 ♙c5. The game ends in perpetual

check after 38...♙fe8 39 ♙f6+ ♜b7 40 ♙xe8 ♙xe8 41 ♚xd7 ♙xe3 42 ♚c6+ ♜a7 43 ♙f7 ♙e2+ 44 ♜b1 ♚e1+ 45 ♜a2 ♚a5+ (45...♙e7?? 46 ♚c5+).

39 ♜b4 ♙a4+ (D)
39...♚b5? loses to 40 ♙f5.



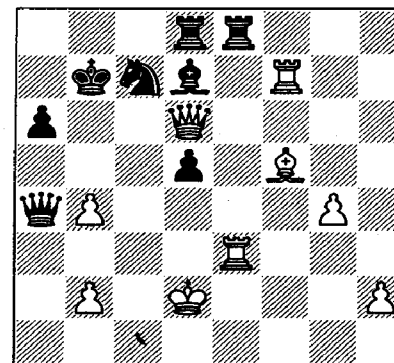
W

40 ♜d2 ♜b7
41 ♙f5

From White's viewpoint, a bad symptom: he has to exchange pieces, as otherwise it is his own king that comes under attack. For example after 41 ♙f6 (threatening 42 ♙a3), there is 41...♙xg4!. Nor is 41 ♙c3 ♙ge8! any good for White, for example: 42 ♚d6 ♙e2+! 43 ♜xe2 ♙xg4+ 44 ♜f2 ♙xd6 45 ♙cxc7+ ♜b8 (but not 45...♜b6?? 46 ♙b7+ ♜c6 47 ♙fc7#) 46 ♙b7+ ♜c8 47 ♙a7 ♚c6, or 42 ♚c5 ♚c6 43 ♚f2, when Black must avoid 43...♚b6? 44 ♚xb6+ ♜xb6 45

♙xd7, while a draw results from 43...♚xg6? 44 ♙xc7+ ♜xc7 45 ♚a7+; the winning move is 43...♚d6!.

41 ... ♙ge8
42 ♚d6 (D)



B

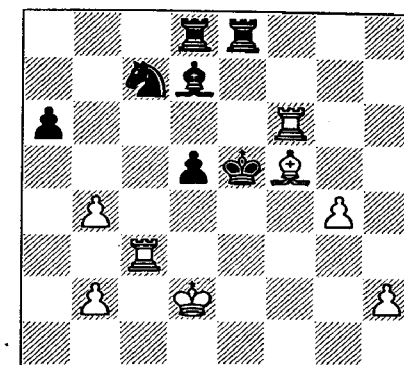
42 ... ♚c6!
42...♙xe3? is a mistake on account of 43 ♙xd7!.

43 ♚xc6+
43 ♚xd7? ♙xd7 44 ♙xd7 would fail against 44...♚h6! 45 ♙xe8 d4.
43 ... ♜xc6!

In the case of 43...♙xc6 44 ♜h4, the position would remain unclear – the white passed pawns are very dangerous. To deal with them, it is important above all to exchange White's strong bishop; this explains why Black takes on c6 with his king. Admittedly this allows his opponent to regain some of the lost material, but a major simplification

occurs, after which Black still has enough advantage to win.

44 ♙c3+ ♜d6
45 ♙f6+ ♜e5! (D)



W

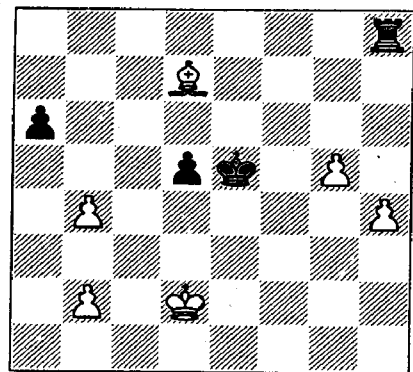
46 ♙xc7 ♜xf6
47 ♙xd7

After 47 ♙xd7 ♙h8, Black quickly works up a decisive attack with the combined forces of his two rooks and the king.

47 ... ♙xd7
48 ♙xd7 ♙h8
49 ♜h3 ♜e5!

The king should stay in the centre while the rook copes with the kingside pawns. On 49...♜g5?, play might continue 50 ♜b5 axb5 51 ♜d3 ♙xh3+ 52 ♜d4 ♙b3 53 ♜xd5 ♙xb2 54 ♜c5 ♜b4 55 ♙a4 with a draw.

50 ♜g5 ♙g8
51 ♜h4 ♙h8 (D)
52 ♜g6



W

By some means or other White has to swap pawns on the queen-side. The immediate 52 b5 is refuted by 52...♙d6! 53 bxa6 (what else?) 53...♙xd7 54 a7 ♖a8! (but not 54...♙c7? 55 h5 ♙b7 56 h6 ♙xa7 57 ♙d3 ♙b6 58 ♙d4 ♙c6 59 b4 ♙d6 60 b5 ♙e6 61 b6 and White saves himself).

52 ... ♖xh4
53 b5

There is hardly any point in 53 ♙c8, as Black could then choose between taking both b-pawns and winning the g6-pawn.

53 ... axb5
54 ♙xb5 ♙d4!

The most precise continuation; the black king supports the advance of the d-pawn. The consequences of 54...♖b4 55 ♙d3 (55 ♙e8) 55...♖xb2+ 56 ♙e3 ♖g2 57 ♙f3 are less clear-cut.

55 ♙c2

Or 55 ♙e8 ♖h2+ 56 ♙c1 (56 ♙e1 ♙e3 57 ♙f1 ♙f3!) 56...♖g2 (56...♙e3?! 57 ♙c6) 57 ♙f7 ♙e4 58 b4 d4 59 b5 d3 and Black wins.

55 ... ♖g4

56 ♙e8 ♙e3

57 b4 d4

57...♖xb4? 58 ♙f7.

58 g7 ♖xg7

59 ♙b3 ♖g5

A good move, though not obligatory. The immediate 59...d3 was also playable, for example 60 ♙h5 ♖g5 61 ♙d1 ♖g1 62 ♙h5 ♖h1 63 ♙g4 ♙f4.

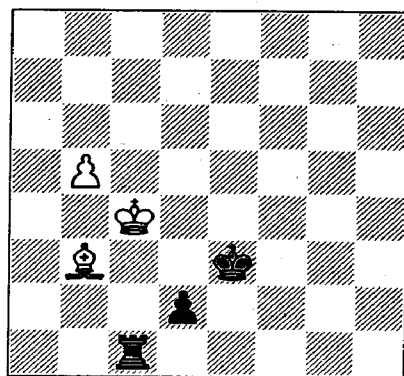
60 ♙c4 d3

61 ♙a4 d2

62 ♙b3 ♖g1

63 b5 ♖c1+! (D)

Not, of course, 63...d1 ♙?? 64 ♙xd1 ♖xd1 65 b6 and draws.



W

64 ♙d5 ♖b1

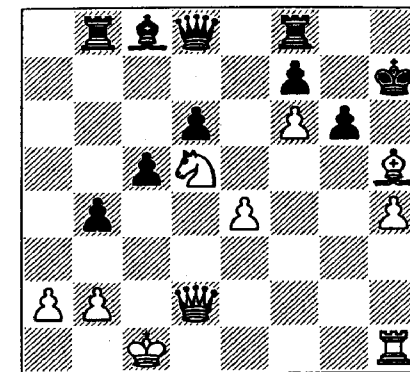
0-1

"I have played about 300 games by correspondence and won most of them, but few of those victories have given me so much creative satisfaction as this unsuccessful attack. The excitement of the imaginative contest took such a hold of me that at a certain point the bare result ceased to be all that important; creativity occupied the foreground..."

"In this game, heaven knows, I did everything that was then in my power. My opponent played better – all praise to the winner! However, I conducted the attack without heed for the circumstances, and in the final analysis human beings are responsible for their actions, not for the result... Of course it was madness to let the black pawn get to a2, but 'he who has never done anything reckless is less wise than he thinks' (La Rochefoucauld). Surely creative pleasure counts for no less than miserable half-points or even a full point? And did not Caissa repay me a hundred-fold for those glorious deeds of recklessness which I permitted myself not only in this game but in others that did not end so sadly?" (Sanakoev).

Examining this game, I cannot help recalling a vivid article by Bent Larsen. (It was published in

the 5th issue of the Danish magazine *Skakbladet* for 1982.) I call the reader's attention to the following extract.



B

Rivas – Mestel
Marbella Zonal 1982
(notes by Larsen)

When annotating this game for *Ekstrabladet* [a Danish tabloid newspaper], I was influenced by Rivas's analysis and also by the editor Dinesen, who was doing his best to hurry me. And so... I confirmed that in this position Black was doomed: 24...gxf6? 25 ♙g5; 24...♙e6? 25 ♙g5 ♙xd5 26 ♙xg6+ fxf6 27 h5, and White wins (according to Rivas, the sequel could be 27...♙xf6 28 hxf6+ ♙g8 29 ♙xd5+ ♙g7 30 ♖h7+ ♙xg6 31 ♙h5# – beautiful, without a doubt). I would point out one instructive

feature: the queen on g5 blocks the g6-pawn (this would normally be a pawn's job).

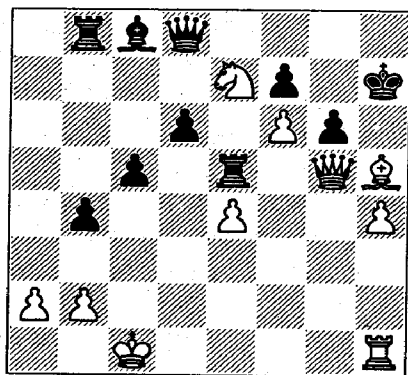
Maybe Mestel overlooked something here, seeing that he lost in another four moves. As he thought for a full hour over move 26 in a vain effort to find a defence, it is precisely here, at move 24, that a diligent reader should be looking for Black's last hope. We will come back to the diagram position, but first let us see what happened in the game.

24 ... ♖e8??

25 ♖g5!! ♖e5

What else could he do? White was threatening ♖xg6+ and h5.

26 ♘e7! (D)



B

26 ... ♖g8

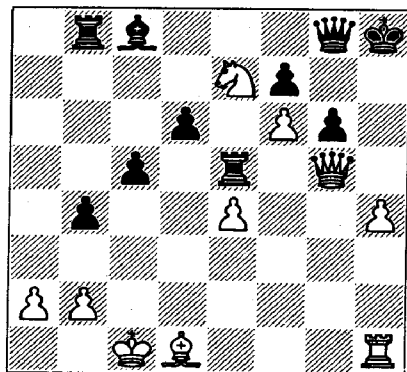
The main variation is 26... ♖xg5 27 hxg5 ♖xe7 28 fxg7 ♖e6 and then 29 ♖d1+ ♖g7 30 ♖a4 or 29

♖e2+ and 30 ♖b5. We shall presently see why I mention this second possibility. The d1-a4 diagonal might have been blocked!

Apart from this line, there is 26... ♖f8 27 ♖xg6+ ♖h8 (27... fxg6 28 h5) 28 ♖f5 ♖xf5 29 exf5 ♖h7 30 ♘g8!! . Perhaps this is just what Mestel overlooked? And yet 30 ♘g8 isn't hard to find if you ask yourself how White is going to prevent the defence 30... ♖h6.

27 ♖d1 ♖h8 (D)

Or 27... ♖xe7 28 h5.



W

28 ♖h6+ 1-0

Very pretty. But let us return to move 24 – when Mestel clearly had plenty of thinking time – and see what moves and ideas were available aside from 24... gxf5, 24... ♖e6 and 24... ♖e8.

One possibility, for instance, is 24... ♖e8. The queen supports the

g6-pawn, and also eyes the square e5 (as the rook did after 24... ♖e8) and the e4-pawn. There might follow 25 ♘e7 c4 26 ♖g5 ♖b5, but we already know the refutation: 27 ♖xg6+! fxg6 28 h5.

So 24... ♖e8 fails to save Black, but it was worth looking at it all the same; eccentric moves sometimes lead us to the right ideas. [Let us recall what was said about Reshevsky – that he deliberately slipped into time-trouble after first analysing all (!) the tactical refinements of the position, and then played with complete assurance 'with his flag dangling'. This is an obvious fabrication. He couldn't have grasped all the tactical refinements – new ones would have cropped up.] But there is something else for us to think about: at every move since the seventeenth, the possibility of ...b3 has been in the position. There you are! At the moment Black is not threatened with mate in two, and on 24...b3 White has cause for alarm about ...bxa2. If 25 a3, we come back to the ... ♖e8 idea: 25... ♖e8 26 ♘e7 ♖a4!, and Black has unexpectedly come to life. The queen attacks c4, d4 and e4, for example 27 ♘xg6? ♖c4+!, or 27 ♖f3 ♖c4+ 28 ♖b1 ♖c2+. White has a pawn for the exchange and some positional trumps, so the chances are about equal.

The idea of ...b3 (which was there all along) in conjunction with ... ♖e8 (which has just become possible) is something that comes to light when you survey the position in desperation – when you see that all the natural replies are unsatisfactory. At the fateful moment you play 24...b3!! without even looking at 25 ♖b1 or 25 axb3.

After 25 ♖b1 (the king is on a light square!), there is of course no point in taking the a2-pawn. A good move is 25... ♖e8, but 25... ♖b7 is also playable, so as to take on e4 with check (25 ♖b1? ♖b7!? 26 ♖g5 ♖xd5 27 ♖xg6+? fxg6 28 h5 ♖xe4+ 29 ♖a1 ♖xf6).

After 25 axb3, Black can occupy the open a-file. The defensive idea ... ♖xb3-h3 also suggests itself, but unfortunately it does not work. The simple 25... ♖a8 forces the reply 26 ♖c2, and again the king is on a light square. Black can play 26... ♖b7 or even 26...c4, but why give White another pawn for the exchange?

There is scope here for lengthy analysis. However, in practical play, the most plausible course of events is 24...b3!! 25 a3 ♖e8!, and now the optimist who is playing White will have a long think – if he has the time. Gradually his ears will go red, his breathing will become heavy, his knees will start

shaking slightly, and ... so will the whole board.

Level-headed defence saves many a point. I have seen Jonathan Mestel wriggle out of tighter corners than this. I am convinced that after 24...b3 he would even have

won the game. Optimists on the attack are very bad at readjusting to changed circumstances.

The trouble for annotators is that games ending in a beautiful, overwhelming victory can be hard to analyse objectively.

14 Errors and What Lies Behind Them

Mark Dvoretsky

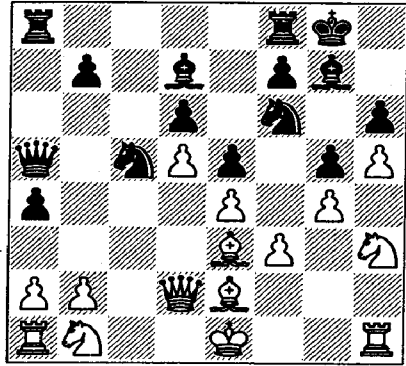
'To err is human.' It is a truism that no chess player has the gift of playing faultlessly. Sometimes blunders stem from the sheer difficulty of solving the problem in hand, or from some chance conjunction of circumstances. Very often, however, mistakes conform to a distinct pattern; they result from some of your failings as a player or as a person. This applies not only to ordinary chess players but also to the leading grandmasters and even the World Champion.

The most difficult thing for any of us is to handle unfamiliar types of situation in which we lack adequate experience. To some extent this deficiency can be cured by purposeful training, but unfortunately there are few players who engage in this.

It is well known that one of the main strengths of Garry Kasparov lies in his deep, large-scale opening preparation. For many years he himself, the members of his team

(which he constantly replenishes) and, latterly, some powerful computers have been working tirelessly to perfect his opening arsenal. As a result he gets into difficult positions comparatively rarely; in this department his experience is quite modest. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that defence is one of his relatively vulnerable points. When he *is* compelled to defend, Kasparov always does so as actively as he can; he immediately tries to undertake something, to alter the complexion of the fight by sharp play. This characteristic of his was discussed, in particular, by Grandmaster Evgeny Bareev in a lecture he gave in 1992 at a session of our chess school.

In the diagram on the following page, Black has the choice between exchanging queens and sharply sacrificing a piece on e4 (17...♖c7? is anti-positional; White continues 18 ♖a3 followed by ♖c1 and ♖f2).



B

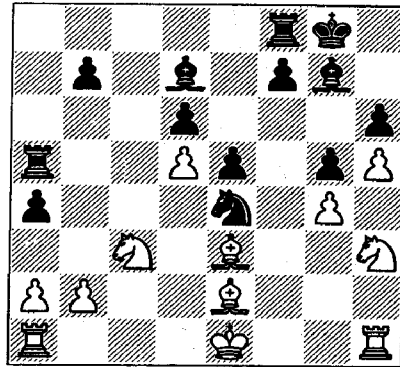
Bareev – Kasparov
Linares 1992

In Bareev's opinion the right move is 17... ♖xd2+!. Then 18 ♔xd2? ♜fxe4+ is too risky for White, and so is 18 ♔xd2?! (with the idea of developing the knight on a3) 18... ♔xg4! (better than 18... ♜fxe4 19 fxe4 ♜xe4 20 ♜c3) 19 fxg4 ♜cxe4 (intending 20... ♜xd5), and if 20 ♔f3, then 20... ♜xd2 and 21... e4. White would have to play 18 ♜xd2 b5 19 ♜f2 ♜fc8 with approximate equality.

"We all have our own styles, our own idiosyncrasies as players," Bareev remarked in his lecture. "In Black's place I would have resigned myself to the queen exchange. However, Kasparov doesn't like positions where he hasn't any counterplay. He didn't want to go into a quiet and (as he thought) slightly

inferior ending, so he decided on rather a dubious piece sacrifice..."

17 ... ♜fxe4?!
18 fxe4 ♜xe4
19 ♖xa5 ♜xa5
20 ♜c3! (D)



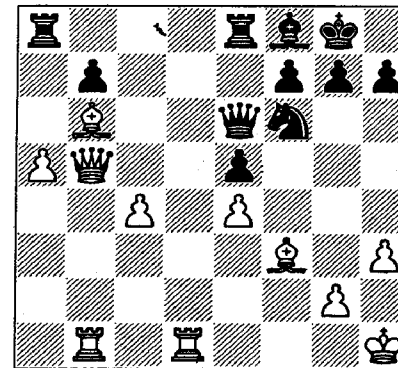
B

"Simple and strong. If 20... ♜xc3 21 bxc3 ♜xd5, then 22 ♜f2 and White will set up a light-square blockade. Without counterplay, Black's three pawns are not enough for the piece. He needs to have some dynamic weapon, such as two connected passed pawns" (Bareev).

There followed: 20... ♜g3 21 ♜g1 ♜xe2 22 ♔xe2 e4 23 ♜ac1! f5 24 gxf5 ♜xf5?! (24... ♔e8) 25 ♜f2 ♔e8 26 ♜h1 ♔b5+ 27 ♜xb5 ♜xb5 28 ♜c8+ ♔h7 and now, instead of 29 ♜d1? ♜xb2+ 30 ♜d2 a3!, with an unclear position – as occurred in the game – White

could have gained a decisive advantage with the simple 29 ♜b1! ♜fxd5 30 b4! axb3 31 axb3.

In many cases active defence is precisely what holds out the most promise, but this is by no means always so. Any kind of one-sidedness is a bad thing. There are times when you need to parry your opponent's threats calmly and cope with the problems patiently and accurately. A lack of flexibility in his methods of fighting makes a player vulnerable.



W

Anand – Kasparov
World Championship match (9),
New York 1995

Interestingly, in his match with Anand (New York 1995), Kasparov more than once opted for active defence in positions where it

was wholly out of place (though in the second half of the match Anand was demoralized and unable to punish him for it).

27 ♜d5!

Obviously, accepting the Indian grandmaster's positional exchange sacrifice is extremely dangerous; the attacking force that it gives White in the centre and on the queenside is too strong. Black should have parried the threat of 28 ♔c7 with 27... ♜ec8! (not fearing 28 ♜xe5 ♖xc4, and envisaging ... ♖c6 at a suitable moment). Black's position would still be unpleasant but by no means lost.

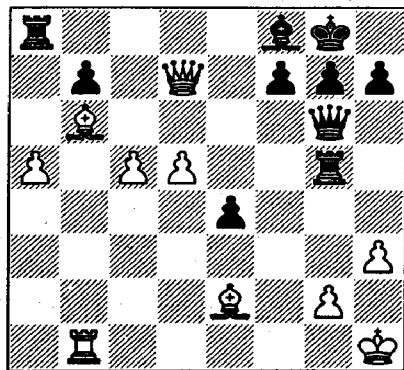
27 ... ♜xd5?
28 exd5 ♖g6

Kasparov took the rook all the same. Why? As I see it, the explanation is that he was hoping for active play of his own. His queen has targeted the white rook as well as the squares c2 and d3. The active move ... e5–e4, attacking the bishop, is coming... Alas, these are all delusions. The strategic strengths of White's position count for far more.

29 c5 e4
30 ♔e2 ♜e5
31 ♖d7! ♜g5? (D)

In Chernin's view, 31... e3 would have put up much stiffer resistance, e.g.: 32 ♜f1 ♜g5 33 ♔d3 e2! 34 ♔xe2 ♜xg2 35 ♔d3 ♜g1+! 36 ♜xg1 ♖xd3, and the position is

still sharp. 32 ♖g1 is better, but rather than transpose to the game with 32...♖g5, Black could play a different, more useful, move.



W

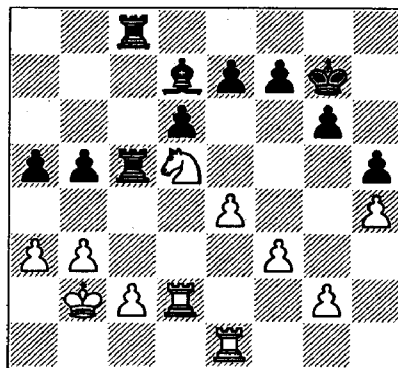
32 ♖g1 e3
33 d6 ♖g3
34 ♖xb7 ♖e6
35 ♔h2! 1-0

Black resigned as after 35...♖e6 36 ♖xa8 he has no good way to make use of the discovered check.

In the next diagram, the e7-pawn is under attack. After the natural 27...♔f8 Black would have had an acceptable though somewhat inferior position. Instead, Kasparov played 'actively'.

27 ... ♖e6?

In the actual game his stratagem paid off, because his opponent was tempted into an unsound continuation based on a fork: 28 b4? axb4



B

Anand – Kasparov
World Championship match (11),
New York 1995

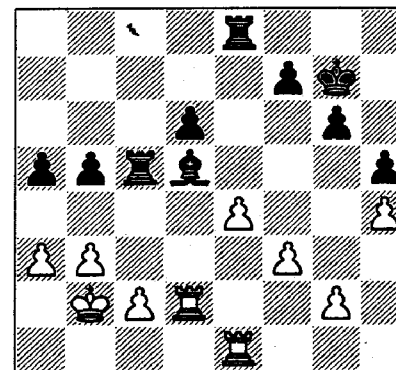
29 axb4 ♖c4 30 ♖b6??. I should add that Anand only took a few minutes over this sequence and played the fateful knight move almost instantaneously. Why? On the one hand, evidently, the immense nervous strain – intensified by the emotions of losing the previous (tenth) game – was taking its toll. On the other hand, Anand is lacking in the discipline of scrutinizing variations intensively and painstakingly. He possesses remarkable intuition – many of his decisions (including quite difficult ones) are taken quickly, and yet speed of thought is partly at odds with correctness and precision of calculation.

Now there followed 30...♖xb4+ 31 ♔a3. White assumed he was

winning the exchange for a pawn – after, for instance, 31...♖bc4 – but had missed the terrible rejoinder 31...♖xc2!. He could only resign at once (0-1), seeing that after 32 ♖xc2 ♖b3+ 33 ♔a2 ♖e3+ Black comes out two pawns up.

In this case Kasparov was just lucky. In actual fact the move he played was bad! By capturing on e7 White could have forced a double rook ending with an extra pawn and excellent winning chances:

28 ♖xe7! ♖e8
29 ♖d5 ♖xd5 (D)



W

30 b4! axb4
31 axb4

White could also have reached this position via the alternative move-order 29 b4 axb4 30 axb4 ♖c4 31 ♖d5.

31 ... ♖c4
32 ♖xd5

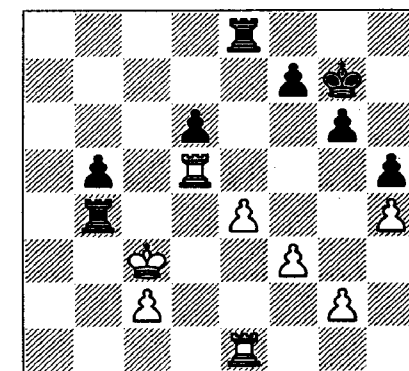
White could have reached this position by force. Of course we will not stop here. Some specific but not very complicated analysis is needed to take the variation to its logical conclusion. It is amazing that neither Anand (during the game) nor Kasparov (in his commentary for *Informator*) was equal to the task.

32 ... ♖xb4+

If 32...♖ec8? (suggested by Kasparov after the game), then 33 c3! (stronger than 33 ♖e2 ♖xb4+ 34 ♔c1 ♖c6 35 ♖ed2 ♖a6) 33...♖xc3 34 ♖e2 with 35 ♖xb5 to follow.

33 ♔c3 (D)

Not, of course, 33 ♔c1? f5 with equality.



B

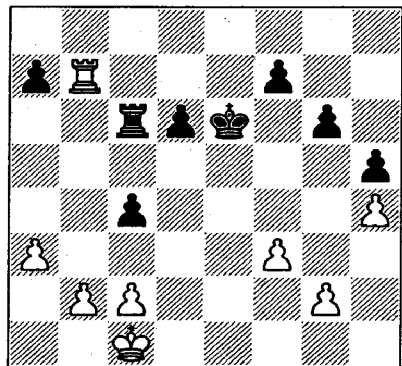
33 ... ♖c4+
34 ♔b3 ♖ec8

34...f5 is more tenacious, but after 35 ♖xb5 ♖d4 36 ♔c3 Black is left with a difficult position.

35 ♖e2

Black loses one of his pawns, and his chances of salvation are highly problematic.

I am sure that if Anand had calculated this variation accurately he would have played it. White's advantage here is greater than in the position he was trying to reach with 28 b4?. (If anything that position is drawish.)



B

Anand – Kasparov

*World Championship match (17),
New York 1995*

In this position Black should play 32...a6, removing his pawn from attack. An important point is that on 33 ♔d2 (with the positional threat of ♔c3-d4) Black has 33...c3+! 34 bxc3 ♖c5, after which the game should be drawn. However, Kasparov again chooses an

'active' line in place of the 'normal' one.

32 ... ♖c5?

33 ♖xa7 g5

Black seems to have everything under control; White loses his g-pawn after 34 hxg5 ♖xg5, or his f-pawn after 34 g3 gxh4 35 gxh4 ♖f5. However, Anand finds a splendid rook manoeuvre to refute his opponent's idea.

34 ♖a8! gxh4

35 ♖e8+! ♔d7

Evidently 35...♔f5 was even worse: 36 ♖e4 ♔g5 37 a4!?

36 ♖e4 c3

At this stage White is faced with rather a difficult choice. The Indian grandmaster simply decided to win a pawn:

37 ♖xh4?! cxb2+

38 ♔xb2 ♖g5

39 a4

However, in the position that has resulted White's pawns are disunited and his opponent has real chances of saving himself (given the drawing propensities of rook and pawn endgames). Indeed Kasparov eventually secured the draw.

With a little more self-confidence (his failures in the preceding games were weighing heavily on him), Anand would most likely have preferred 37 b4! ♖g5 38 ♖xh4 ♖xg2 39 ♔b1. In this case White has yet to win a pawn, but he holds a major

positional trump – two connected passed pawns on the queenside. If he manages to transfer his king to b3 (as in the variation 39...♖f2 40 ♖xh5!? ♖xf3 41 ♔a2), the position is definitely won for him. Black's only counterchance (but I doubt if it is sufficient) lies in pushing his d-pawn to d4 with the white king on b1.

The moral of these examples (more of them could be added to the list) is obvious. For chess players of all levels it is extremely important to analyse your own games thoroughly and unearth the hidden, underlying causes of your errors. This is always the indispensable first step towards the goal of eliminating them.

15 Analysis of a Game

Mark Dvoretsky

We are going to look at an interesting game played by Sasha Chernosvitov. He has annotated it in great detail, giving a wealth of variations and explaining what he was thinking about during the game, what he was afraid of, what points he missed. His analysis is not fault-free. Errors are of course inevitable in cases like this; when you are examining complicated variations, it is not surprising if you go wrong somewhere. However, your mistakes sometimes serve to reveal characteristic defects in your manner of thought, in your approach to chess. I selected this game for discussion for the very reason that some errors committed both in play and in the notes seemed to me instructive.

Denisov – Chernosvitov

Moscow Junior

Championship 1991

Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 d5
2 c4 dxc4

3 e3 f6
4 xc4 e6
5 f3 c5
6 0-0 a6
7 a4 c6
8 e2 c7
9 c3 d6
10 dxc5

Other moves to have been played are 10 b3, 10 d5 and 10 d1. In his annotations Sasha sets out his detailed views on the theory of this variation. However, as his opening ideas are to some extent a personal matter, there is no need to discuss them here. The problems arising later will be of more interest to us.

10 ... xc5
11 h3?!

11 e4 is more thematic, though White then has to reckon with 11...g4 (threatening 12...d4) or with an immediate 11...d4. White wants to advance his e-pawn in complete comfort, but in the opening every tempo matters; with such slow play you cannot count on an advantage.

11 ... 0-0

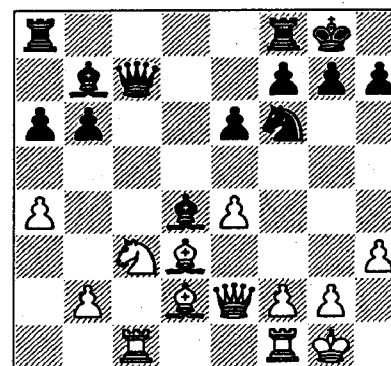
12 e4 d4!
13 xd4 xd4

The opening phase of the game has ended favourably for Black. He controls the central squares, the c4-bishop is obstructed by the e6-pawn, while the white e-pawn is kept in restraint and in some variations even comes under fire (for instance 14 e3? xc3 15 bxc3 xe4). Black only has to develop his light-squared bishop, and his position will be preferable.

14 d2?!

Chernosvitov recommends 14 d3, preparing to bring the other bishop to e3.

14 ... b6
15 Rac1 b7
16 d3 (D)



B

The threat of 17 d5 (or 17 b5) is completely obvious. But what will White do after the black

queen has left the c-file? Perhaps exchange the dark-squared bishops with 17 e3, but most likely he will prepare f2-f4 by moving his king to h1. Can Black make it hard for him to carry out these plans?

16 ... g3!

An excellent manoeuvre! It is much stronger than 16...e5 17 h1 h5 18 g4.

17 h1 h4

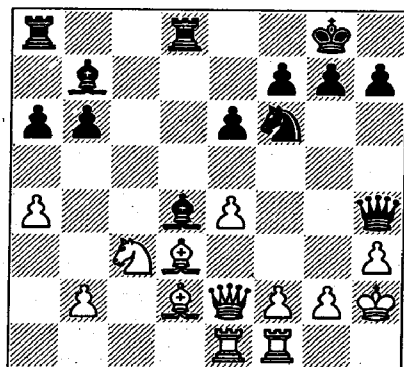
The queen is splendidly placed on h4. From here it pressurizes the white e-pawn and at the same time eyes his king. If appropriate, the knight will jump to g4. If 18 f4, then 18...h5 19 e1 g3+ 20 xg3 xg3 with the better chances for Black. Perhaps this was the least of the evils for White.

18 ccl f8

The white pieces on the d-file are starting to feel uneasy. Now on 19 c2 (with the idea of h2 and g3, or f3-g3), Chernosvitov suggests 19...g5! 20 f3 e5 21 e2 d4. If 19 d1 (preparing 20 c3), then 19...b5 20 axb5 axb5 21 c3 e5 22 f3 xc3 23 bxc3 (23 xc3 b4) 23...a2, and Black has a considerable plus. Sasha considers that the relatively best defence is 19 f3!? xf2 (19...e5 20 d1) 20 xf2 xd3 21 xd3 xf2 22 e3!? xe3 23 xe3 xe4 (23...d7 24 d1) 24 xe4

♙xe4 25 ♙xb6 with chances of salvation (for example, 25...f5?! is ineffective in view of 26 ♖c1 ♕f7 27 ♙d4).

19 ♕h2? (D)



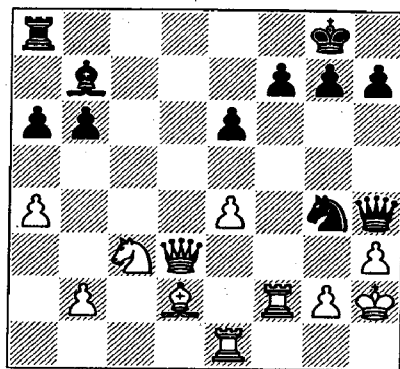
B

Now the combination in the last line gains dramatically in strength.

19 ... ♙xf2!
20 ♖xf2 ♖xd3
21 ♗xd3 ♕g4+! (D)
22 ♕g1 ♗xf2+
23 ♕h1

Chernosvitov has conducted the first half of the game very powerfully. He has completely outplayed his opponent and gained an advantage quite sufficient for victory. However, from this moment on, another player seems to take over.

How should Black proceed now? 23...♗h4 looks inviting, but then the counter-attack with 24 ♗d7 is unpleasant. Therefore Black should



W

first of all consider the more solid 23...♕e5!. White's reply 24 ♗e3 is forced. Let us continue the variation: 24...♗xe3 25 ♙xe3 ♕c4 26 ♙c1 (26 ♙f2 ♕xb2 27 ♙xb6 ♖c8 is also dismal, for example 28 ♙d4 ♖c4 29 ♖b1 ♖xd4 30 ♖xb2 ♗d7) 26...♗d8 27 b3 ♕e5 28 ♙f4 (28 ♙e3 ♗d3) 28...f6 and Black will exploit his extra pawn with no particular trouble.

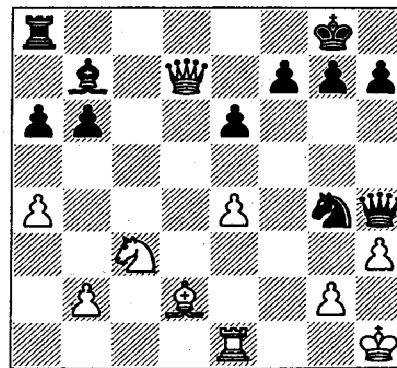
Why didn't Sasha play this? He wanted to carry on the attack – out of inertia, and for fear that White might save the endgame thanks to the opposite-coloured bishops. The main point, though, is that he underestimated his opponent's threat, imagining that the queen sortie to d7 was unplayable because of the loss of the e4-pawn. In actual fact, after 23...♗h4 24 ♗d7 ♕f2+ 25 ♕h2 ♙xe4, White can capture on e4 and then fork two

pieces with ♗c6 or ♗b7. To go in for such adventures you need to be armed with the most precise analysis. I would certainly have stopped at this point and discarded the whole variation (if I hadn't done so already, the moment I spotted 24 ♗d7).

When exploiting an advantage you must pay strict attention to all the opponent's active tries and prevent any unnecessary sharpening of the fight. It may happen that your advantage hangs by a hair, and that to maintain it you need to exert yourself and calculate some long, complicated variations. However, the situation here is clearly different – Black has a sound extra pawn, and there is a safe way to preserve all his assets.

23 ... ♗h4?
24 ♗d7! (D)

What should Black do now?



B

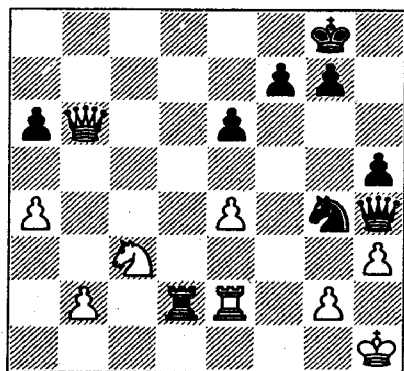
24...♖b8? is thoroughly bad: 25 ♗c7 ♗d8 26 ♙f4. Therefore Black must choose between 24...♗d8 and 24...♕f2+.

With his last move Sasha made a typical psychological mistake: realizing he had obtained a decisive advantage, he relaxed and played carelessly. It now dawned on him that matters were not as simple as they had seemed – and his second psychological error followed. (You will recall Tarrasch's famous dictum: "Errors never come singly.") As often happens, the sudden appearance of difficulties dismayed him and prevented him from coolly examining the variations – which in the present situation are quite complicated. He even failed to solve this problem later, when analysing the game at home.

Chernosvitov rejected 24...♗d8 25 ♗xb7 ♖xd2 on account of 26 ♖e2. However, this is too early to break off the variation; Black can play 26...h5! (or 26...h6!), giving his king some *luft*. His rook is taboo, and his threats look quite dangerous.

Incidentally, in this kind of position the pawn is usually pushed two squares rather than one, as it may join in the attack. However, in the present case both moves are of roughly equal value.

White's reply is obvious: 27 ♖xb6 (D) (not 27 ♖xa6? ♜xb2! or 27...♞c2!). The next problem is to decide how Black should utilize his trumps?



B

The simplest solution – 27...♞e2 28 ♜xe2 ♖e1+ 29 ♜g1 ♜f2+ 30 ♜h2 ♜xe4 – seems to me unconvincing. After 31 ♜f3 (or 31 ♖b8+ ♜h7 32 ♜f3) the co-ordination of Black's pieces is to some extent spoilt, and White simply threatens a rapid pawn advance on the queenside. For example, 31...♖g3+ 32 ♜g1 ♖d6 33 ♖xd6 ♜xd6 34 b4, with ♜d4 to follow.

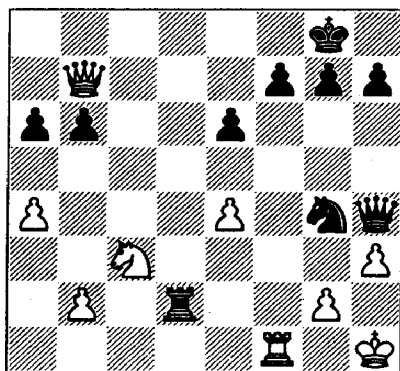
Let us try 27...♜f2+!. On 28 ♜g1, Black plays 28...♜xh3+! 29 gxxh3 ♞xe2 30 ♜xe2 ♖e1+ 31 ♜g2 ♖xe2+, and the queen ending is a win. In this line the pawn is clearly better placed on h5 than on h6, but having it on h6 would still not

alter the verdict (if 32 ♜g3, then 32...♖e1+ followed by 33...a5 is good enough).

If White plays instead 28 ♜h2, Black has a splendid knight sacrifice: 28...♜xh3! 29 gxxh3 ♞d3! with an irresistible attack, for example 30 ♖b8+ ♜h7 31 ♜g1 ♞xh3 32 ♞h2 ♖g5+!, etc.

If White tries to evade the mate he ends up in a lost endgame: 29 ♞xd2 ♜f4+ 30 ♜g1 ♖e1+ 31 ♜h2 ♖xd2, or 29 ♖b8+ ♜h7 30 ♖g3 ♖xg3+ 31 ♜xg3 ♞d3+ 32 ♜h2 ♜g5 (or 32...♜f4) 33 ♞c2 a5.

In place of 26 ♞e2, we still have to look at 26 ♞f1! (D). Now how should Black continue?



B

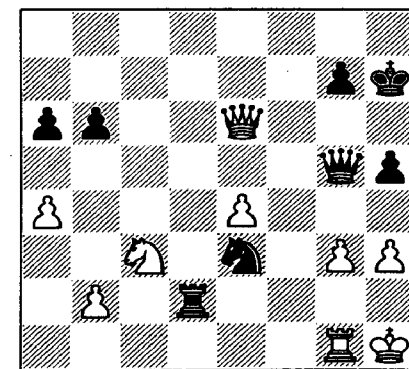
White's answer to 26...f6? is not 27 ♖xb6? ♜f7 (threatening 28...♖g3 and 28...♜f2+), but 27 ♖e7!. So Black must choose between 26...h6 and 26...h5.

A line that looks good is 26...h6 27 ♖xf7+ ♜h7 28 ♖xe6 ♜e3 29 ♞g1 ♖g3, and White is defenceless. However, 29 ♞g1? is not obligatory; 29 ♜d5! ♜xf1 30 ♖f5+ leads to perpetual check.

Black's attack can be strengthened with 26...h5! (instead of 26...h6) 27 ♖xf7+ ♜h7. If 28 ♖f3, the simplest course is 28...♜e5 29 ♖e3 ♞xb2, coming out a pawn up. Sharper play (although still favourable to Black) results from 28...♞xb2 29 e5!? ♜xe5 30 ♖e3 ♖c4! (30...♜g6 31 ♜e4), and if 31 ♞f4, then 31...♖c6 32 ♜e4 ♖c2.

The main variation is 28 ♖xe6 ♜e3. This time, 29 ♜d5 doesn't work: 29...♜xf1 30 ♖f5+ ♜h6 31 ♖e6+ g6 and the checks run out. Instead White plays 29 ♞g1, intending to counter 29...♖g3 with 30 ♖f7 (as you see, having the pawn on h5 has a minus side as well as a plus side). Black must reply 29...♖g5!, but then White has 30 g3! (D). How should the attack be continued now?

30...h4 31 gxxh4 ♖h5 32 ♞g3 ♜f1 33 ♞g2 is useless for Black, while 30...♞xb2 31 ♜d5 leads only to a draw. The strongest move is 30...♞f2!, depriving the white queen of the f5-square and threatening 31...♜f1 or 31...♜g4 32 hxxg4 hxxg4! (but not 32...♖d2? 33 ♞g2!). The best defence is 31



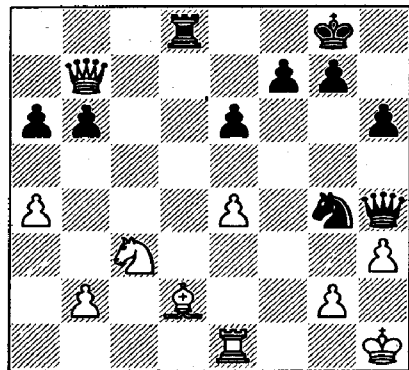
B

♖xb6, but there follows 31...♜g4! (31...♞f3 32 ♖xa6 is unconvincing) 32 hxxg4 ♖d2 33 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 34 ♞g2 (34 gxxh5 ♖xb2) 34...♖f1+ 35 ♜h2 hxxg4 36 e5 ♜g8!?, and Black retains substantial winning chances.

Grandmaster Dolmatov discovered another unexpected and interesting way to handle the attack. After 24...♞d8 25 ♖xb7, he suggested 25...h6!? (D) instead of taking the bishop.

Now 26 ♞e2 ♞xd2 would transpose into lines we have seen already. However, in reply to 26 ♞f1, the capture on d2 is not compulsory. Black has the much stronger 26...♜f2+! 27 ♞xf2 ♖xf2, when the bishop cannot escape.

The best defence is probably 26 ♜d5! exd5 27 ♞f1 (27 exd5 is no good at all in view of 27...♜f2+ and 28...♜e4), but then Black has



W

27...Qf2+ 28 Kh2 (28 Kg1 Qxh3+ 29 gxh3 Wg3+ 30 Kh1 Wxh3+ 31 Kg1 Wg4+!, etc., is hopeless for White) 28...Qxe4 or 28...dxe4 29 Re1 e3, emerging with an extra pawn.

This is another good moment to recall Tarrasch's view that you have to resort to combinations in order to make up for your previous errors. I should point out, incidentally, that an over-the-board decision to go in for such intricate tactical complications is not all that difficult if you apply the process of elimination – if you satisfy yourself at the outset that all other tries are unpromising. Strange though it may seem, Sasha saw that he would gain nothing from 24...Qf2+ 25 Kh2 Re4, but nonetheless quickly rejected 24...Rd8. Such, evidently, was the psychological effect of the mistake he

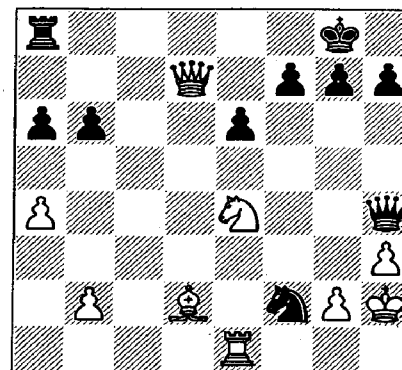
made beforehand, of which I have already spoken.

24 ... Qf2+
25 Kh2 Re4?

As Evgeny Bareev observed, it was not too late to revert to lines like those we have analysed, by playing 25...Rd8! 26 Wxb7 Rxd2. Only this time, Black should meet 27 Re2 (27 Wb8+ Rd8 28 Wg3 Qg4+!) not with 27...h5 or 27...h6, in view of 28 Wxa6! (28...Qg4+ 29 Qg1!), but with 27...g5!. For example: 28 Wxb6 Qxh3! 29 gxh3 Rd3, or 28 Wxa6 Rxe2 29 Wxe2 g4 30 We3 (30 Kg1 gxh3!) 30...gxh3 31 Wg3+ Wxg3+ 32 Qxg3 Qd3 33 gxh3 Qxb2 34 Qf4 f6, with an easy win in the knight ending. Incidentally, with this order of moves, just as in Dolmatov's line that we considered earlier, Black deprives the opponent of his best defence – Rf1!.

26 Qxe4? (D)

White misses a golden opportunity. He had to play 26 Rxe4! Qxe4 27 Wc6 Wg3+ (after 27...Rd8 28 Qxe4, the d2-bishop is defended – this is why White had to take with the rook, not the knight) 28 Qg1 Rd8 29 Qxe4. Then 29...We5 is answered by 30 Wxb6 Wd4+ 31 Re3, while on 29...Wb8 (which Chernosvitov wanted to play), White has 30 Re3! b5 31 a5 h6 32 Wxa6 Rd1+ 33 Qf2 We5 34 Qc3 with equality.



B

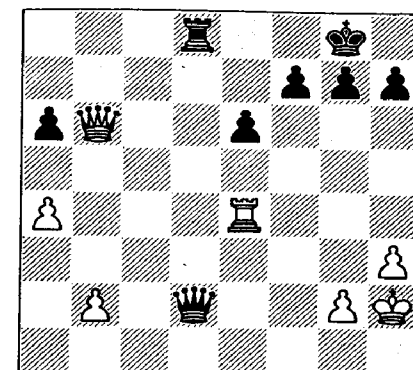
In endgames a rook often proves stronger than a bishop and knight if it manages to break into the enemy camp in good time, attack the queenside pawns, and set up a passed pawn in that part of the board. However, in this case the endgame is still a long way off, and anyway it is Black's queenside pawns, not White's, that will come under attack first.

26 ... Qxe4
27 Wc6 Wg3+
28 Qg1 Wf2+
29 Kh2 Wg3+

Repeating moves helps to save thinking time.

30 Qg1 Wf2+
31 Qh2 Rd8
32 Rxe4 Wxd2
33 Wxb6 (D)

Black has a sound extra pawn. Ought he to exchange queens or retain them?



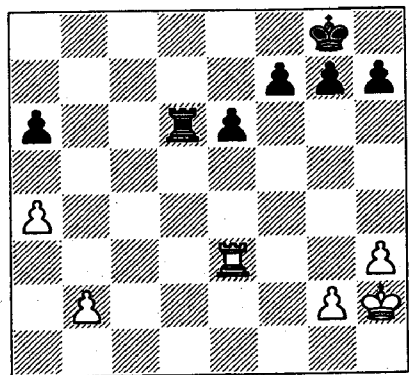
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Of course it is better to play with the queens on. The white king is exposed and can easily come under attack. Chernosvitov illustrates this verdict with the following sample variations: 33...h6 34 b4 (34 Wxa6 Wxb2) 34...Rd6 35 Wb8+ Qh7 36 b5 axb5 37 axb5 f5! 38 Rc4 e5 (38...We5!, with the fearsome threat of 39...We5+, is much simpler – Dvoretsky) 39 Rc2 Wf4+ 40 g3 Rd2+ 41 Rxd2 Wxd2+ 42 Qg1 We3+ 43 Qg2 e4 44 Wf4?! We2+ 45 Qg1 Wxb5.

Instead Black decided to go into a rook endgame. This was a false assessment of the position! Even if the ending is a win, it is clear that exploiting Black's advantage would have been much simpler with queens on the board.

33 ... Wd3?
34 Re3 Wd6+
35 Wxd6 Rxd6 (D)

An interesting rook endgame has arisen. In examining it, I came across quite a few questions which Chernosvitov either ignores or answers unconvincingly in his notes.



W

36 ♖b3

White is preparing a4-a5 and ♖b6. This idea is attractive, but he should also have considered the more conventional plan starting with 36 b4 (the rook will station itself behind the passed pawn). After 36...♙f8 37 b5 axb5 38 axb5 ♙e7 39 ♖b3, Black must avoid 39...♙d7? 40 b6 ♙c8 on account of 41 ♖c3+ ♙b8 42 ♖c7. The right move is 39...♖b6, after which Black should win, though it is not that simple. If his king goes to c5, White replies ♖c3+; hence Black will need to sacrifice a tempo with ...♖b6-b7. Meanwhile White will be preparing kingside counterplay.

How? For example, with 40 ♙g3 ♖b7 41 ♙f4 ♙d6 42 g4 and then 42...f6 43 g5 ♙c5 44 ♖e3, or 42...♙c5 43 ♖c3+ ♙xb5 44 ♙e5, intending ♖c8-g8.

36 ... g6?

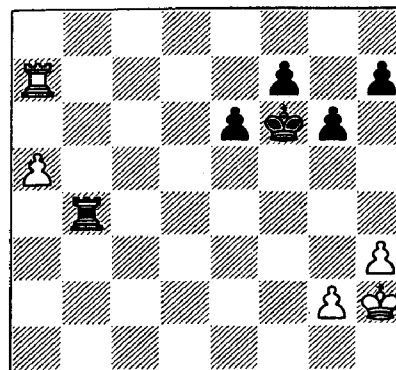
A very strange move, on which Sasha makes no comment at all. It is clear that Black will have to advance his kingside pawns. Then why not push a pawn two squares right away – why waste a tempo? The play may become sharp, a race may begin, in which every tempo will count. In this instance, Black's delay may not alter the verdict on the position. Later, however, a similar error *will* do so.

Of course 36...g5!? was stronger than the text-move. Also 36...f5!? looks no less attractive, aiming to bring the king to f6 and then play ...h5-h4 and ...e5-e4. For example: 37 a5 (37 ♖b7 a5!?) 37...♙f7 38 ♖b6 ♙e7! (gaining another tempo) 39 ♖b7+ ♙f6 40 ♖b6 ♖d2 41 b4 ♖d4.

37 ♖b8+

Here Chernosvitov observes: "It looks as if White had an immediate draw with 37 a5 ♖d5 38 ♖b8+ ♙g7 39 b4 ♙f6 40 ♖b6 ♖d4 41 ♖xa6 ♖xb4 42 ♖a7 (D)."

Roughly the same position can arise in many variations, and its evaluation is important for a correct understanding of the entire



B

endgame. Is it drawn? The black rook is excellently placed to the rear of the passed a-pawn. I don't see how White can oppose the advance of the black kingside pawn armada. For example, 42...h5 43 a6 ♖a4 44 ♙g3 h4+ 45 ♙f3 e5 46 ♖a8 (46 ♙e3 ♖a2) 46...♙f5 47 a7 ♖a3+ 48 ♙f2 and then 48...g5 and 49...♙f4. Note that the f-pawn is well placed on its original square; after 49 ♖f8 ♖xa7 it is defended by the rook. A typical mistake would be 48...f6?, when ♖f8 becomes a much stronger answer to ...♙f4.

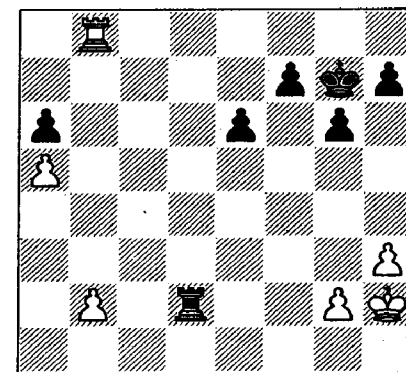
37 ... ♙g7

38 a5 ♖d2 (D)

Another plan is to bring the black king into the centre, but then Black would have to give up one or two kingside pawns. Chernosvitov's analysis goes: 38...♙f6 39 ♖b6 ♙e5 40 ♖b7 f5 41 ♖xh7 ♖d5 (after 41...♙d4 42 ♖b7 e5 43 ♖b6

♙c5 44 ♖xd6 ♙xd6 45 g4! fxg4 46 hxg4 ♙c5 47 ♙g2 the pawn ending is drawn) 42 b4 ♖b5 43 ♖a7 ♖xb4 44 ♖xa6 ♖a4 45 ♖a8 ♙f4 46 a6 e5 47 a7 e4 (47...g5 48 g3+ ♙e4 49 ♖g8 or 48...♙f3 49 ♖f8) 48 ♖g8 ♖xa7 49 ♖xg6 e3 50 ♖e6, with a draw.

This line is interesting but not forced. Right at the end, in place of 49...e3?, Black has the much stronger 49...♙e3!, after which I am not convinced that White can save himself – the e-pawn is just too dangerous. On the other hand it is not entirely clear why White used up two tempi advancing his a-pawn before going after the g6-pawn. In answer to 45...♙f4, either 46 ♖a6 e5 47 ♖xg6 or 46 ♖e8 e5 47 g3+ seems indicated.



W

39 ♙g3 ♙f6
40 b4 ♖b2

41 ♖b6 ♔e5?

Pushing the kingside pawns, with 41...h5 or first 41...g5, would be more natural. Incidentally, after ...h5, the king's move to e5 gains in strength, for when the white rook goes to the seventh Black simply replies ...f5, and the h-pawn will not be *en prise*.

42 ♖b7

Chernosvitov comments: "Both players missed the two-move variation 42 ♖xa6 ♖xb4 43 ♖a7 with a draw." Well, we have already discussed a similar position; in fact after 43...♔f6, Black should probably win. Another attractive line is 43...f5 44 ♖xh7 ♖a4 45 ♖a7 g5 followed by ...♖a3+.

When analysing endgames it is very important to make a correct assessment of the key positions that can arise from different variations. Sasha misjudged one such position, and his entire understanding of this endgame was distorted.

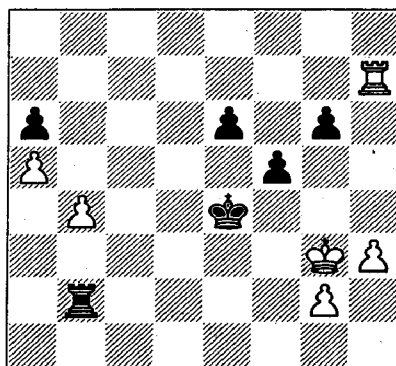
I would point out that White has no time to bring his king to the queenside. A typical variation is: 42 ♔f3 f5 43 ♔e3 g5 44 ♔d3 f4 45 ♔c3 ♖xg2 46 ♖xa6 f3 47 ♖a8 (47 ♔d3 can be met by 47...♖b2 or 47...h5) 47...h5 48 a6 ♖a2 49 ♔b3 ♖xa6! 50 ♖xa6 f2 51 ♖a1 g4 52 hxg4 hxg4 53 b5 ♔d5! 54 ♖c1 g3 55 b6 g2 56 b7 f1 ♖ 57 b8 ♖ ♖xc1.

42 ... / f5

43 ♖xh7

This is the consequence of Black's omission of ...h5. The outcome of the game is now in doubt.

43 ... ♔e4! (D)



W

How is White to defend this endgame? Straightforward tries are unsuccessful, for example:

a) 44 ♖a7? f4+ 45 ♔h4 ♖xg2 with an easy win.

b) 44 ♖g7? f4+ (better than 44...♖xb4 45 ♖xg6 ♔e5 46 h4) 45 ♔h2 f3 46 ♖xg6 e5 intending 47...f2.

c) According to Chernosvitov's analysis, 44 h4! would have saved the game. White frees the h3-square for his king. There could follow: 44...f4+ 45 ♔h3 e5 46 ♖a7 ♔e3 47 ♖xa6 e4 48 ♖xg6 ♔f2 49 a6 e3 50 ♖f6 e2 51 ♖xf4+ ♔e3 52 ♖f8 e1 ♖ 53 ♖e8+ ♔f2 54 ♖xe1 ♔xe1 and then 55 ♔g4 or 55 a7 ♖a2 56 ♔g4.

44 ♖h4+?

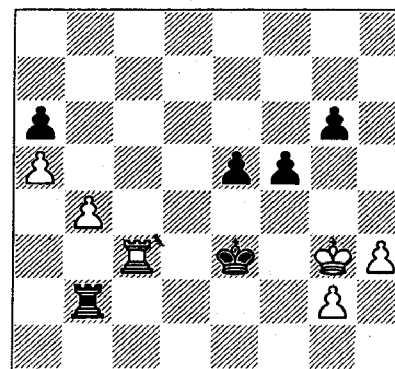
A decisive loss of time.

44 ... ♔e3

45 ♖c4 e5

46 ♖c3+ (D)

Or 46 ♖c6 f4+ 47 ♔h2 e4 (threatening 48...f3) 48 ♔g1 ♖b1+ 49 ♔h2 ♖xb4 followed by ...♔f2 and ...e3.



B

46 ... ♔e2

47 ♖c6 ♖xb4

48 ♖xg6

Or 48 ♖e6 f4+ 49 ♔g4 f3+ 50 ♔g3 f2 51 ♖xe5+ ♔f1.

48 ... f4+

49 ♔h2 e4

50 ♖xa6 e3

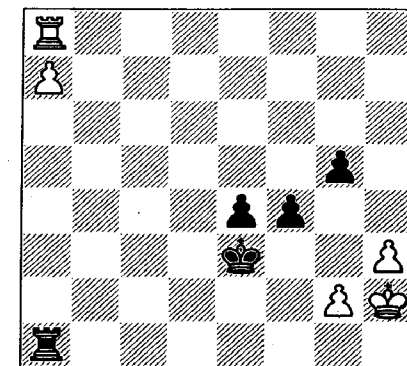
51 ♖b6 ♖a4

52 a6 ♔f2

0-1

When analysing complex endings we sometimes come across

special positions which, although not perhaps arising by force, are of interest in themselves. One such position is analysed by Chernosvitov.



In his view, this position is a case of mutual zugzwang. It is not hard to see that White loses if it is his move (1 g3 f3; 1 h4 g4; 1 ♖g8 ♖xa7 2 ♖xg5 ♔f2 3 ♖f5 f3 4 gxf3 e3). However, I cannot agree with Sasha's conclusion that with Black to move the game is a draw. White's king is too awkwardly placed. I would play 1...♖a2 2 ♔g1 ♖a6! 3 ♔h1 (3 ♔h2 ♖a1) 3...g4! 4 hxg4 ♔f2 5 g5 ♔g3 with inevitable mate.

There is also another, more striking solution: 1...♔f2 2 ♖e8 g4! 3 h4 (3 hxg4 ♖xa7) 3...♖a3!! (3...f3! is also strong: 4 a8 ♖ ♖h1+!!) 4 ♔h1 (if 4 a8 ♖ or 4 ♖xe4, Black plays 4...♖h3+! 5

gxh3 g3+) 4... ♖xa7 5 ♖xe4 ♖a1+ 6 ♕h2 g3+ 7 ♕h3 f3 8 ♖f4 ♖h1+ 9 ♕g4 ♕xg2.

Let us sum up. In the second half of the game, Chernosvitov's play was decidedly shaky and even his annotations, albeit thorough, were none too convincing. Two serious failings came across distinctly here:

1) Weakness in exploiting an advantage. We recall that in a won position Black needlessly allowed his opponent to complicate. Subsequently he didn't even make the effort to fathom the complexities that had arisen. Finally he failed to solve the problem of exchanging,

and went into an ending instead of playing for mate. Furthermore, any technician would surely have pushed his g-pawn two squares in one go, not just one. He would also have chosen the right moment to advance the h-pawn; Sasha left it on h7, where it perished.

2) An unsure grasp of rook endings. Some typical ideas and plans escaped Chernosvitov's attention; his general assessments and specific recommendations often proved erroneous.

Sasha would be well advised to do some work on rook endings – better still, on the theory and technique of the endgame as a whole.

16 Some Achievements of Our Pupils

Artur Yusupov

As has become traditional, at the end of our book we present examples of achievements by students of our school (their ages are given in brackets). The young people have played and annotated a whole range of interesting games; some of them will be offered here for the reader's judgement, with minor amendments to the analysis. The writer had a difficult problem of selection; after all, nearly every young player produces good examples of attacking chess. Nor is this surprising; attack, risk and imagination are naturally associated with youth. But let the games speak for themselves.

Boguslavsky (14) – Lepin Moscow 1989 Modern Benoni

1 d4	♟f6
2 c4	e6
3 ♘c3	c5
4 d5	exd5

5 cxd5	d6
6 e4	g6
7 f4	♙g7
8 e5	

This is characteristic of Maxim Boguslavsky's style – right from the opening, White chooses the sharpest line.

8 ...	dx e5
-------	-------

The alternative is 8... ♟fd7 at once.

9 fxe5	♟fd7
10 e6	♟f6?

This is a serious mistake already. According to theory, a better line is 10... fxe6 11 dx e6 ♖e7 12 ♟d5 ♖xe6+ 13 ♖e2 ♖xe2+ 14 ♙xe2 0-0 15 ♟c7 ♟c6 16 ♟xa8 ♟b4 17 ♟f3 ♟c2+ 18 ♕d1 ♟xa1 19 ♙c4+ ♕h8 20 ♖e1, as in a game Lputian-Magerramov, USSR 1979. At this point, according to Maia Chiburdanidze and Eduard Gufeld, 20... ♟b6 21 ♟xb6 axb6 22 ♖e7 would have led to an unclear position.

11 ♙b5+	♕f8
---------	-----

11...♙e7 is also dangerous in view of 12 ♖f4 fxe6 13 d6+ ♙f7 14 ♘f3.

12 ♘f3 fxe6

12...a6 looks a little more precise, although after 13 ♖e2 fxe6 14 0-0 exd5 15 ♘g5 ♙g8 (not 15...♙f5?? 16 ♖xf5; Black also loses with 15...d4 16 ♙b3 ♙d7 17 ♙g4) 16 ♖c4 b5 17 ♙xd5+ ♘xd5 18 ♘f7 White has a very promising position.

13 0-0 exd5

14 ♘g5 ♙g8

It was worth thinking about 14...h6, although in that case, after 15 ♙xd5 ♙xd5 16 ♘xd5 hxg5 17 ♙xg5, White regains his piece and keeps the initiative in the ending.

Now, however, the king's rook is shut in the corner, and White has a chance to carry on his attack virtually unhindered.

15 ♘xd5

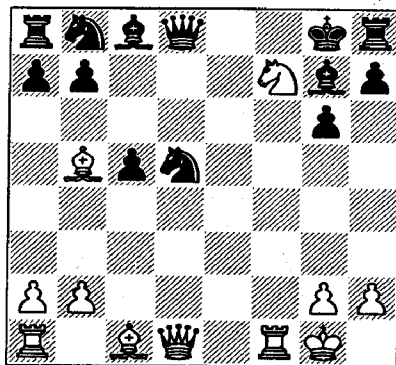
15 ♖c4!? b5 16 ♙xd5+ ♘xd5 17 ♘f7 is not bad either; the idea is to answer 17...♙d7 with 18 ♘h6+ ♙xh6 19 ♙xh6, with decisive threats.

15 ... ♘xd5

When defending your king, you should usually try to exchange queens. In the present case, this would have brought no particular relief: 15...♙xd5 16 ♙xd5+ ♘xd5 17 ♖c4 ♙d4+ 18 ♙h1 ♙g7 19 ♙xd5 ♖f8 20 ♖xf8 (20 ♘f7!? is

quite good too) 20...♙xf8 21 ♘e6+ ♙xe6 22 ♙xb7, winning material.

16 ♘f7 (D)



B

16 ... ♙d4+?

In a difficult position Black goes wrong and is mated elegantly. The unfortunate thing is that a fine queen sacrifice which Boguslavsky had prepared remains on the sidelines. Black's best is 16...♙e7; then after 17 ♘h6+ ♙xh6 18 ♙xd5+ ♙e6 (bad alternatives are 18...♙g7 19 ♖f7+ ♙xf7 20 ♙xh6+ and 18...♙e6 19 ♙xh6) 19 ♙xe6+!! ♙xe6 20 ♙xh6 a fantastic position arises, where White has only one piece for the queen and yet the advantage is on his side – because Black's rook is shut out of play and his king is in a mating net. The following variations, based on Boguslavsky's analysis, support this paradoxical conclusion:

a) 20...♙f7 loses at once to 21 ♖c4.

b) 20...♘d7 21 ♖ae1 ♙d5 (or 21...♙xe1 22 ♖c4+) 22 ♖e7 ♙d4+ 23 ♙h1 ♘f6 (23...♘b6 24 ♖e8+) 24 ♖xf6 and mate is inevitable.

c) 20...♘c6 21 ♖ae1 and now:

c1) 21...♙xa2 22 ♖e4! (22 ♙xc6? bxc6 23 ♖e7 ♙xb2 24 ♖ef7 is weaker because of 24...♙a1!) 22...♙f7 23 ♖c4 ♙xc4 24 ♖xc4 ♘d4 25 g4, and despite his two extra pawns Black's position is unenviable.

c2) 21...♙d5 22 b3 ♘a5 (if 22...♘e5, then 23 ♖xe5) 23 ♖e7 ♙d4+ 24 ♙h1 and Black has no answer to the threat of 25 ♙e8.

c3) 21...♙f7!? 22 b3 (22 ♖xf7 is weaker: 22...♙xf7 23 ♖c4+ ♙f6 24 ♖f1+ ♙e5 25 ♙g7+ ♙e4 and Black equalizes) 22...♘a5 (if 22...♙xf1+ 23 ♖xf1 ♘e5, White has 24 ♖e1 a6 25 ♙f1 ♘f7 26 ♖c4, tying up all the black pieces) 23 ♙e2 ♙d7 24 ♖d1 ♙xd1 25 ♖xd1, continuing the king-hunt.

17 ♙xd4! cxd4

18 ♘h6+ 1-0

Teplitsky (14) – Parutin

Tashkent 1989

Grünfeld Defence

1 ♘f3 d5

2 c4 c6

3 e3 ♘f6

4 ♘c3 g6

5 d4 ♙g7

6 ♙e2 0-0

7 0-0 ♘bd7

The Schlechter Variation of the Grünfeld has arisen by transposition. Black's last move is considered inaccurate, since White can now exchange on d5 without worrying about the black knight going to c6 – its best square in this line. Thus, in Botvinnik-Blau, Tel-Aviv Olympiad 1964, White gained a clear plus after 8 cxd5 cxd5 9 ♙b3 e6 10 a4 b6 11 ♙d2.

8 b3 e6

In a game against Kantsler, Tep-litsky found an antidote to another of Black's possibilities; on 8...b6, there followed 9 a4 a5 10 cxd5 ♘xd5 11 ♘xd5 cxd5 12 ♙a3 ♖e8 13 ♖c1 ♙a6 14 ♙b5! with the better game.

9 ♙c2 ♖e8

10 ♙b2 a5

11 ♖ad1 ♘h5

12 ♙a3!

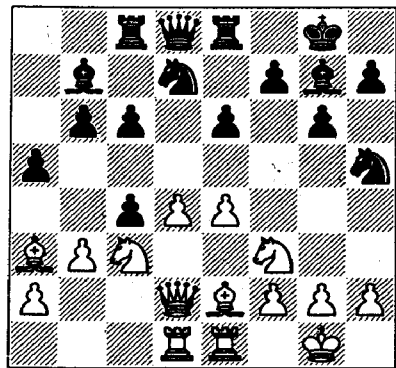
Up to now White has just been developing his pieces sensibly. At this point he reacts to his opponent's plans and takes prophylactic measures against ...f5, which would now be answered by 13 ♙d6, controlling the dark squares.

12 ... b6

Black revises his plan, but his knight turns out to be poorly

placed on the edge of the board (Dr Tarrasch's famous dictum inevitably comes to mind!). White achieves a good game by simple means: he prepares a central advance.

13 ♖fe1 ♗b7
14 e4 ♜c8
15 ♗d2 dxc4 (D)



W

16 e5!

An unconventional decision. Such moves are very easy to miss. White is now threatening to win a piece with 17 g4. The 'automatic' 16 bxc4 would give Black more chances of counterplay after 16...e5 17 d5 ♗f8!? (but not 17...♗c5? 18 ♗xc5 bxc5 19 d6 ♜b8 20 ♗a4 with a decisive plus for White).

16 ... f5

16...cxb3 would be met by 17 g4 b5 18 ♗e4 b4 19 ♗d6 bxa3 20 ♗xb7 ♗e7 21 ♗d6, with advantage. Black probably had to opt for

16...b5!?. After 17 g4 b4 18 ♗e4, he should avoid 18...bxa3 in view of 19 ♗d6 ♜b8 20 ♗xe8 ♗xe8 21 ♗xc4, but might try a recommendation of Dvoretsky's to muddy the waters: 18...♗hf6!? 19 exf6 ♗xf6 20 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 21 ♗c1 c5.

17 exf6!?

Interesting play, although the quiet 17 bxc4 would also have ensured White the better chances.

17 ... ♗hxf6
18 ♗xc4

This move leads to great complications. White gives up two bishops for a rook and pawn. The consequences of such an exchange are usually very hard to assess correctly. In many cases, particularly in the middlegame, the two pieces prove stronger, since they can create more threats against the enemy. In this position, Teplitsky rightly took into account the activity of his major pieces – which will seize the only open file – and the weakening of Black's castled position; these factors outweigh the potential strength of the bishops, which at present are dozing.

18 ... b5
19 ♗xe6+ ♜xe6
20 ♜xe6 b4
21 ♗e2!? bxa3

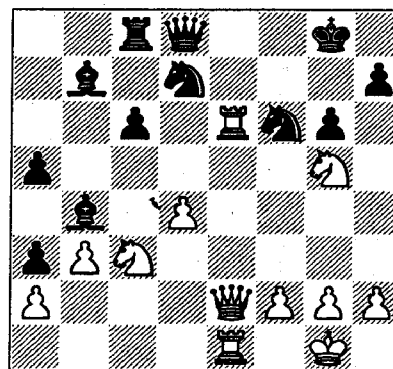
If 21...bxc3, then 22 ♜e7 c2 23 ♗xc2 with an attack.

22 ♜e1 ♗f8

22...♗f8 is bad because of 23 ♜e7 ♜c7 24 ♗c4+.

23 ♗g5 ♗b4 (D)

Black overlooks his opponent's striking reply. However, 23...♜c7 could similarly be met by 24 ♜d6!! ♗xd6 25 ♗e6+ ♗g7 26 ♗xd6 ♗g8 27 ♗e6+ ♗g7 28 ♗f7+ ♗h6 29 ♗e6 ♗e8 30 ♗g7+, with a winning attack.



W

24 ♜d6!!

Freeing e6 for the decisive invasion by the white queen.

24 ... ♗f8

After 24...♗xd6 25 ♗e6+ ♗g7 26 ♗xd6 (but not 26 ♗f7+? ♗h6 27 ♗e6, on account of 27...♗g8), Black is helpless against the concerted pressure of the white pieces; there is no adequate defence against the threats of 27 ♗e6+ or 27 ♜e7+. Black's attempt to counter-attack in the e-file proves futile.

25 ♗e6+ ♗h8
26 ♜xd7 ♜e8
27 ♜xh7+!

Destroying Black's last illusions. White now obtains a decisive material plus, and Teplitsky confidently conducts the game to victory.

27 ... ♗xh7
28 ♗xe8 ♗xg5
29 ♗xg6 ♗f7
30 ♜e3 ♗g7
31 ♗e6 ♗d6
32 ♜h3+ ♗g8
33 ♗e4 ♗xd4
34 ♗f6+ ♗f8
35 ♗e8+ ♗g7
36 ♜h7+ ♗xf6
37 ♗xf7+ 1-0

Boguslavsky (15) – Morozevich
Moscow Junior
Championship 1990
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♗f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♗c3 ♗g7
4 e4 0-0
5 ♗f3 d6
6 ♗e2 e5
7 0-0 ♗e8

This line is rarely seen; its chief merit is that the game now leaves the well-trodden paths.

8 dxe5 dxe5
9 ♗e3

In answer to 9 Qd5 , Boguslavsky gives 9... Qa6 10 Qxf6+ Qxf6 11 Qe3 We7 12 Qd2 Qc5 13 b4 Qe6 14 c5 Qd8 15 We2 Qg5 , with an equal game. The last word spoken on this system by theory is 9 b4! ?, played by Ivanchuk against Judit Polgar at Novgorod 1996. After the continuation 9... c6 10 b5 We7 11 a4 Qd8 12 Qa3 We8 13 Web3 Qg4 14 a5 a6 15 bxa6 Qxa6 16 Wxb7 the game turned clearly in White's favour.

9 ... Qfd7?!

Theory prefers 9... b6 , probably not without reason. After 10 Qd5 Qa6 White has tried out various continuations, but has not gained the advantage with any of them:

a) 11 We2 Qg4 12 Qd2 c6 13 Qe3 Qxe3 14 Qxe3 Qb4 with unclear play, Gostiša-Kupreichik, Belgrade 1988.

b) 11 Qg5 Qxe4! ? 12 Qe7 c6 13 Qxf8 Wxf8 gives Black good compensation for the sacrificed exchange, Vučićević-Kupreichik, Belgrade 1988.

c) The line 11 Qd2! ? Qd7 12 We4 Qb7 leads to an unclear position, Dreev-Gelfand, European Under-20 Championship, Arnhem 1988/9.

10 We2

The immediate 10 b4! ?, followed by c5 and Qd2-c4 , is also not bad.

10 ... c6

11 b4 f5?!
Premature activity. With incomplete development, it is extremely dangerous to open the game.

12 exf5 gxf5

13 Qh6 Qxh6

14 Wxh6 Wg6

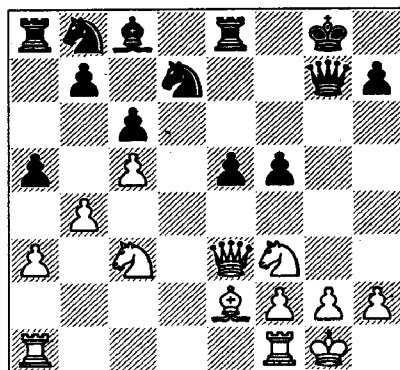
14... Qf6 was worth considering.

15 We3 a5

16 a3 Qe8

17 c5 Wg7? (D)

This is a serious mistake. Although behind in development, Black makes another move with a piece already in play. He should have continued with 17... f4 , and if 18 We4 (or 18 We2 e4 with counterplay) 18... Qf6 19 Wxg6+ hxg6 20 Qc4+ Qg7 21 Qg5 , then (as Dvoretzky has shown) 21... Qf5 (preparing ... Qa6) 22 Qf7 Qd3! 23 Qxd3 Qxf7 with a defensible position.



W

18 Qc4+ Qh8

19 Qg5 Qe7

It is too late now for 19... f4 ? on account of 20 Qf7+ .

20 Qe6 Wf6

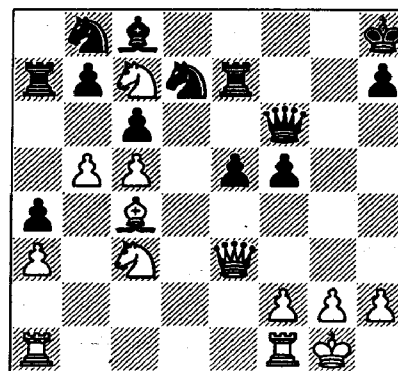
Boguslavsky intended to answer 20... Wf7 with 21 Qc7 Wxc4 22 Qxa8 axb4 23 axb4 Wxb4 24 Qb6 (24 Qa4 is also possible); a sample continuation is 24... Qxb6 25 cxb6 f4 26 Wd2 Wxb6 27 Qa8 Qd7 (27... Wc7 28 Qxb8) 28 Wc2 Wc7 29 Qc1 b5 (29... Qa6 also fails to save him: 30 Qb5 Wd8 31 Qa7 Qc7 32 Qd1 Qe8 33 Wd2) 30 Qxb5 Wb7 31 Qxb8 Wxb8 32 Wxc6 , and Black's position collapses.

21 Qc7 Qa7

22 b5!

Proceeding to the decisive action.

22 ... a4 (D)



W

23 Qd5!

Of course there is no doubt about White's advantage, yet it is often hard to decide whether the moment for tactical operations has come. Here White had a good chance to improve his position further with 23 Qad1 . Still, the exchanging combination which Boguslavsky carries out, and which is reminiscent of the ideas of the previous game, is also good: White begins the tactics just when his opponent's pieces are least prepared for co-ordinated action.

23 ... cxd5

24 Qxd5 f4

This intermediate move in no way alters the verdict on the position. The black centre pawns remain under fire from the major pieces.

25 Wd2 Wg5

26 Qxe7 Wxe7

27 Qfe1

Black is unable to unravel his tangle of pieces on the queenside. His pawn-hunting excursion can be explained by the good old principle of being hanged for a sheep rather than a lamb. Boguslavsky quickly finishes the game with energetic play.

27 ... Wxc5

28 Qac1 Wxa3

If 28... Wf8 , White simply plays 29 Qe6 Qb6 30 Qxc8 Qxc8 31 Qxe5 and wins.

29 ♖e6 ♜f8
30 ♜c3

30 ♜xe5 is possible too.

30 ... b6

Nor does 30... ♜c5 save him, in view of 31 ♜a1 ♜f8 32 ♜xe5.

31 ♜xe5 ♜f6

32 ♜g5!

A nice stroke, though not complicated. As taking the queen allows immediate mate, Black can only try to postpone this inevitable fate by a couple of moves.

32 ... h6

33 ♜g8+ ♔h7

34 ♜d3+ 1-0

Zviagintsev (13) – Nachev
Voskresensk 1990
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5
2 c4 c6
3 ♘f3 ♘f6
4 ♘c3 dxc4
5 a4 ♙g4

A somewhat risky system, which Nikolić has championed in a number of games. Without a doubt, White has to play most energetically to cast doubt on it.

6 ♘e5 ♙h5
7 h3!

The most unpleasant variation from Black's point of view. White wants to seize the centre with his pawns at a favourable moment, and

therefore prepares to unpin his e-pawn.

7 ... ♘a6

Zviagintsev-Frog, Moscow 1989 illustrates what can happen if Black renounces the fight for the initiative: 7... ♘bd7 8 g4 ♙g6 9 ♘xc4 e6 10 ♙g2 ♙b4 11 0-0 0-0 12 a5! ♘d5 13 ♜b3 b5 14 axb6 ♘7xb6 15 e4 ♘xc3 16 bxc3 ♙e7 17 f4!. White has successfully carried out his plan to seize the centre.

8 g4 ♙g6

9 ♙g2 ♘b4

10 0-0

10 e4 would be answered by 10... ♜xd4.

10 ... ♙c2!?

Better than 10... ♘d7?! 11 ♘xc4 with advantage to White, Gelfand-Khuzman, USSR 1987.

11 ♜d2 ♙b3
12 ♘e4!

Obscure complications arise from 12 ♜f4!? h6 13 ♙e3, Levitt-Flear, British Championship, Plymouth 1989. Against 12 a5, with the unambiguous threat of pushing the pawn further, current theory recommends 12... e6, ignoring the threat. After 13 a6 ♜c7. 14 axb7 ♜xb7, Campos Moreno-Rogers, Manila Olympiad 1992, White still has to prove that he has enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

12 ... ♘c2

12... ♘xe4? 13 ♜xb4 ♘d6 is bad because of the striking retort indicated by Gelfand and Kapengut: 14 ♜xb7!! and White wins.

13 ♘c5

If 13 ♘xc6, then 13... ♜b6! (Gelfand and Kapengut).

13 ... ♜xd4

13... ♘d5, as played in Bellon-Pomes, Playa de Aro 1994, requires further tests.

14 ♘xb7 ♘d5

14... ♜xd2? is a mistake because of 15 ♙xc6+! ♜d7 16 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 17 ♜d1 f5 18 ♜xd7 ♘xa1 19 ♜d8+ ♔f7 20 ♜xa8, Khenkin-Sapis, Leningrad 1989. ♘

15 ♜g5!

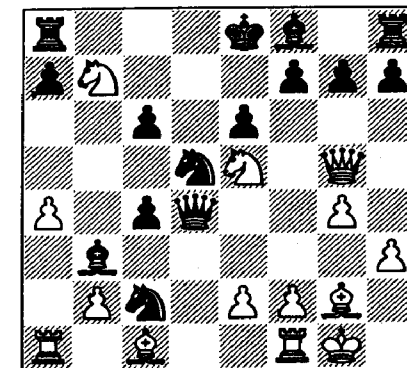
Zviagintsev's pre-game preparation sets Black some unpleasant problems. The alternative 15 ♘xc6 ♜xd2 16 ♙xd2 is less dangerous on account of 16... e6 (Gelfand and Kapengut), with a roughly equal game.

Now White threatens both 16 ♘xc6 and 16 ♜f5.

15 ... e6!? (D)

Against the uncompromising 15... f6!?, Zviagintsev intended 16 ♜h5+ g6 17 ♘g6 hxc6 18 ♜xh8 g5 19 h4! with the initiative. If instead 15... ♜b6, then according to his analysis a strong reply is 16 ♜f5 ♜xb7 17 ♜xf7+ ♔d8 18 ♜d1 c3 (18... ♘xa1? 19 ♙xd5 ♙xd1 20 ♙xc6 ♜xc6 21 ♘xc6+ ♔c7 22

♙f4+ ♔xc6 23 ♜xc4+; 18... ♘b4 19 ♙f4) 19 ♘xc6+ ♜xc6 20 ♙xd5 ♙xd5 21 ♜xd5+ ♔c8 22 ♜d3!.



W

16 ♙e3!!

A most unpleasant move for Black to have to face. It turns out that capturing the bishop is bad; 16... ♘dxe3?? loses at once to 17 ♙xc6+, while after 16... ♘cxe3 the f-file is opened and White obtains an extremely dangerous attack: 17 fxe3 and then 17... f6 18 ♜xf6 gxf6 19 ♜h5+ (Horvath) or 17... ♜xb2 18 ♜ab1 ♜c3 19 ♜xf7, when 19... ♙c2 is answered by 20 ♜xg7! ♙xg7 21 ♘d6+ ♔d8 22 ♘xc6#.

16 ... ♜xb2

17 ♙c5!

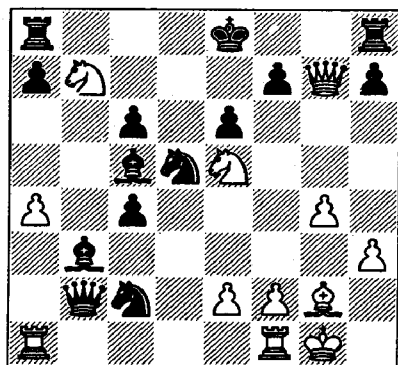
White increases the pressure.

17 ... ♙xc5

17... ♘xa1? loses to 18 ♙xd5 cxd5 19 ♘d6+. In reply to 17... h6, White had prepared 18 ♜f4!! f6 19

♖e4 ♗xe5 20 ♗g6+ ♔d7 21 ♗f7+ ♔c8 22 ♖a5 ♖b8 23 ♖xf8, with a very powerful attack.

18 ♗xg7! (D)



B

This *zwischenzug*, with its mate threat, is the point of White's play.

18 ... ♖f8

Relatively the best continuation. A queen sacrifice with 18... ♗xe5 19 ♗xe5 ♔d4 would bring no relief, because the threats created by the queen in conjunction with the knight would be too strong. For instance, 20 ♗d6 ♖a1 21 ♗xc6+ ♔f8 22 ♖d6 ♖g7 23 ♖xd5 exd5 24 ♖f5+ would end in mate.

The insertion of 18... ♖xf2+ only opens up another line of attack: 19 ♔h2! (19 ♖xf2 ♗xa1+ 20 ♔h2 ♖f8 21 ♖xf7 leads to unnecessary complications after 21... ♗xe5+) 19... ♖f8 20 ♖d6+ ♔e7 21 ♖xc6+ ♔xd6 22 ♗xb2 ♔c5 23 ♗e5+

♖xc6 24 ♖xd5+ exd5 25 ♖f6+ and Black is helpless.

19 ♖xc5 0-0-0!

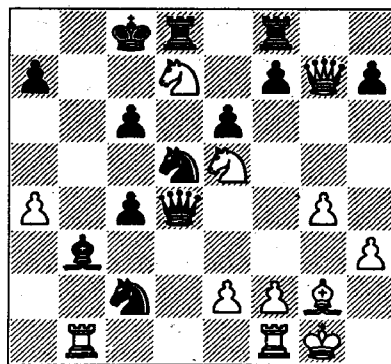
In such a position it is easy to overlook something. Thus, after 19... ♖xa1? 20 ♖xe6! ♗a3! 21 ♖xd5 cxd5 22 ♖c7+ ♔e7 (or 22... ♔d8 23 ♗f6+ ♔c8 24 ♗c6) 23 ♗g5+ f6 24 ♗g7+ Black loses at once.

20 ♖ab1! ♗d4

Again best; 20... ♗c3 is weaker due to 21 ♖e4, and so is 20... ♗a3 in view of 21 ♖xb3 cxb3 22 ♖xc6.

21 ♖cd7?! (D)

Against stubborn defence it can be very hard to play the attack faultlessly. A simpler line was 21 ♖xb3! cxb3 22 ♖xb3, when the contrasting situations of the two kings would surely tell. The operation that White has in mind gives his opponent unexpected saving chances.



B

21 ... ♖c3?

Black thinks he has to return blow for blow. With his king exposed, this leads to a quick catastrophe. Of course, 21... ♖xd7? is bad: 22 ♗xf8+ ♔d8 23 ♗xd8+ ♔xd8 24 ♖xc6+. The sole defensive possibility lay in 21... ♖fe8!! 22 e3!? (22 ♖xd5 exd5!) 22... ♗c3 23 ♖c5!? ♖e7!, and if 24 ♖e4, then 24... f5!. True, White would have good chances of victory in this line too. He would continue 25 ♗xe7 ♗xe5 26 ♗c5!? (26 ♗g5 is also worth considering) 26... fxe4 27 ♗xc6+ ♖c7 28 ♖xe4 with the better game, for example: 28... ♔d5 29 ♖xd5 ♗xd5 30 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 31 ♖xb3 cxb3 32 ♖b1 ♖c3 33 ♖xb3 ♖xa4 34 ♖b5.

22 ♖xf8! ♖xb1

23 ♖xc6 ♗b6

23... ♗f4? is no good in view of 24 ♖xe6.

24 ♗xf7 c3

24... ♖d4 is relatively better, but is adequately met by 25 ♖d7+ ♔b8 26 ♖xb1. The move played loses even more material.

25 ♖d7+ 1-0

When we talk about attack, this naturally conjures up thoughts of beautiful combinations and finely calculated sacrifices. In many cases, though, the attacker succeeds without any brilliancy. The

following game is a case in point – victory was gained without any outward show, by methods that look perfectly simple. Yet such simplicity is deceptive; finding a quiet move to strengthen your position is often harder than striking a tactical blow.

Nikitin – Makariev (15)

CIS Junior Championship,

Jurmala 1992

King's Indian Defence

1 d4	♖f6
2 c4	g6
3 ♖c3	♖g7
4 e4	d6
5 f3	0-0
6 ♖e3	♖c6
7 ♖ge2	a6
8 a3	

The main line is the natural 8 ♗d2, but the move chosen here, preparing queenside play, also contains some poison. Ilia Makariev, however, is well prepared for this turn of events, and plays as theory recommends.

8 ...	♖d7
9 b4	♗b8!?

Black prepares ...b5 without hurrying, since in this line it is simpler for White to react to his opponent's operations than to carry out his own plan. An immediate 9...b5 would be met by 10 cxb5 axb5 11

d5 ♖e5 12 ♜d4, and if 9...e5, then 10 d5 ♖e7 11 g4 ♖e8 12 ♜c1 f5 13 ♜b3, Korchnoi-Stein, USSR Championship, Leningrad 1963.

10 ♜d2

If 10 ♜c1, the reply 10...b5 is quite in order, since after 11 cxb5 axb5 the b5-pawn is indirectly defended (12 ♙xb5 ♜xb4). If 10 d5 ♖e5 11 ♜d4, then 11...c6 12 dxc6 (12 f4 is met by bringing a knight to g4; 12 ♙e2 cxd5 13 cxd5 ♙c8) 12...bxc6 13 ♙e2 a5, with counterplay.

10 ... b5

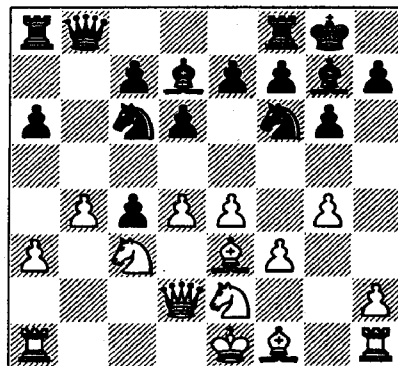
If the pawns are now exchanged on b5, the threat of capturing on b4 arises. Black can also play Boleslavsky's recommendation: 10...♙e8!? (this move is very useful if White removes his knight from e2, since ...e5 then gains in strength) 11 g3 b5 12 c5 a5 13 ♙b1 e6 14 ♙f2 ♜b7 with equal chances.

11 g4

A bold decision, but White is conducting his attack on too broad a front. On the other hand, continuations like 11 d5? ♖e5 12 cxb5 ♜c4, 11 cxb5 axb5 12 d5? ♜xb4 and 11 ♜c1 e5 are none too impressive. A playable alternative is 11 c5!? a5 12 ♙b1 axb4 13 axb4, maintaining his central position. Organizing counterplay for Black would then be a good deal more complicated (13...dxc5 14 bxc5);

the open file in his hands would as yet play no particular role.

11 ... bxc4 (D)



W

12 h4

On 12 ♙b1, Black was planning 12...e5 13 d5 ♜a7 (13...♖e7, aiming for ...♖e8 and ...f5, is also playable) 14 a4 c6, with counterplay.

It was worth thinking seriously about 12 g5!?. Then 12...♖e8 would be met, not by 13 f4, in view of 13...e5! 14 dxe5 ♙g4 15 exd6 (or 15 ♜g3 dxe5 16 f5 ♜d4) 15...♜xd6, but by 13 h4! e5 14 d5 (14 h5!?) 14...♖e7 15 h5 with unpleasant threats. Black would probably have to opt for 12...♜h5!? 13 ♜g3! e5 14 ♜xh5 gxh5 (14...exd4? 15 ♜xg7 dxe3 16 ♜b2) 15 ♜d5 (15 dxe5!?) 15...exd4 (15...♜xd4? 16 ♙xd4 exd4 17 ♜f6+) 16 ♜f6+, and now, on Dvoretsky's advice: 16...♙h8 17 ♙xd4 (17 ♜xd7?

dxe3) 17...♜xd4 18 ♜xd4 ♙e6, with prospects of queenside counterplay with ...c5 or ...a5.

12 ... h5

It was essential to put a brake on White's kingside advance. The unexpected 12...a5 13 b5 ♜b4?! is too pretty to be true. White can choose between the unpretentious 14 axb4 axb4 15 ♙xa8 bxc3 (15...♜xa8?! 16 ♜a2) 16 ♜xc3 ♜xa8 17 ♙xc4 with the better game, and the more refined 14 ♜c1!? threatening ♙b1.

13 g5 ♜h7

14 ♙b1?! (D)

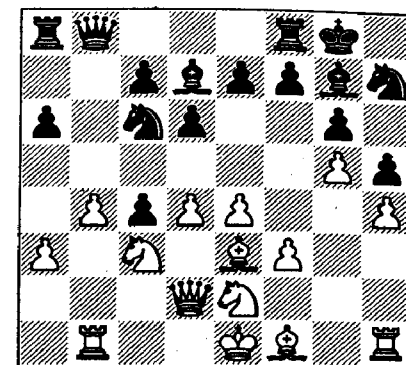
This move seems to hand the initiative to the opponent. Instead, 14 f4!?, threatening 15 d5, is more consistent. If 14...a5, then according to Makariev's analysis White should continue 15 b5 ♜a7 16 ♙b1 (16 a4 c6!) 16...♜e8 17 a4 ♜c8 18 ♜g3 ♜b6 19 f5. It definitely makes sense for Black to sacrifice a pawn by 14...e5!? 15 dxe5 ♙g4 16 exd6 ♙f3, with a double-edged game.

14 ... ♜d8!

By modestly bringing his queen back, Black prepares counterplay in the centre.

15 f4

Black would answer 15 d5 with 15...♖e5 16 ♜d4 e6! 17 f4 (17 dxe6 c5!) 17...exd5 18 ♜xd5 (18 fxe5 dxe5) 18...♜g4 with numerous threats.



B

15 ... e5

Black starts the central counter-attack.

16 fxe5?

16 d5? is a mistake in view of 16...exf4. Now, however, Black's central position is strengthened even more. It was time to think about development and preparation for castling with 16 ♙g2.

16 ... dxe5

17 d5 ♜a7

18 a4

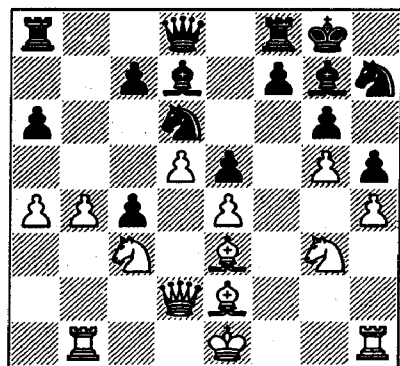
Parrying the obvious threat of ...♜b5, White allows a more sinister plan. However, it is hard to recommend anything more suitable. Neither 18 ♙xa7 ♙xa7 (threatening ...f6), 18 ♙c5 ♙e8 nor 18 d6 cxd6 19 ♜xd6 ♜b5 would bring White any comfort. The pawn Black happened to snatch on c4 is looking more and more like a healthy extra one...

18 ... ♖c8!

The knight heads for d6, where it will not only defend the c4-pawn but also pressurize White's centre. Black's advantage is growing.

19 ♖g3 ♖d6

20 ♙e2 (D)



B

20 ... ♗e8!

Black would like to play ...f6, after which White's position on the kingside should collapse. However, the immediate 20...f6? would be answered by 21 ♙xh5! or 21 ♖xh5!, with wholly unnecessary complications. Black's subtle prophylactic move prepares the decisive offensive without loss of tempo.

21 ♗a2

Stopping his opponent's most obvious and least dangerous threat.

21 ... f6

22 ♙g1 fxg5

23 hxg5 ♗e7

24 ♗d2 ♙f4!

The decisive blow! After Black's 'quiet' 20th move his attack proceeds on oiled wheels.

25 ♙xh5 gxf5

26 ♖xh5 ♙g4

27 ♙xg4 ♙xg4

28 ♖g3 ♙f8

29 g6 ♖f6

30 ♙c5 ♖h5

0-1

To conclude my story of achievements by our youngsters, I would like to give another, more recent, game by Vadim Zviagintsev. It was declared the best game in *Informator 62*.

Cifuentes – Zviagintsev (18)

Wijk aan Zee 1995

Semi-Slav Defence

1 d4 d5

2 c4 e6

3 ♖f3 ♖f6

4 ♖c3 c6

5 e3 ♖bd7

6 ♗c2 b6!?

7 ♙e2

7 ♙d3! ♙b7 8 0-0 is more energetic; if 8...dxc4?!, then 9 ♙xc4 c5 10 ♗e2.

7 ... ♙b7

8 0-0 ♙e7

9 ♙d1

In Zviagintsev's view, 9 b3 is more precise.

9 ... 0-0

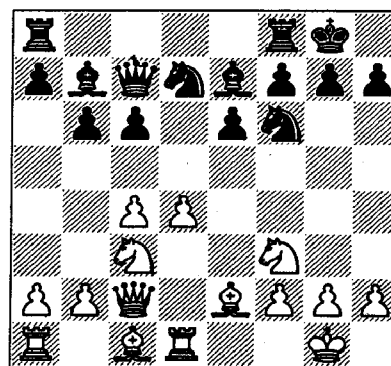
10 e4 dxe4

11 ♖xe4 ♗c7!

It makes sense to prevent ♙f4.

12 ♖c3?! (D)

This way White cannot count on any advantage. If he wanted a comfortable game, he shouldn't have avoided exchanges. Either 12 ♖xf6+!? or the simple 12 ♙g5 c5 would have given approximate equality.



B

12 ... c5

13 d5?!

A risky conception, but 13 ♖b5 ♗b8 14 g3 cxd4 15 ♖bxd4 ♙e8 also promised White nothing. Perhaps he should have completed his development with 13 ♙g5.

13 ... exd5

14 cxd5 a6

15 ♖h4

Cifuentes's aim of exchanging Black's blockading piece will not be achieved; 15 a4 at once was better. It was also worth considering the simple 15 ♙g5 or even the hyper-active 15 ♗f5!?

15 ... g6

An immediate 15...♙d6 would have led to roughly the same situation, but Black didn't want to give his opponent active possibilities after 16 ♖f5 ♙xh2+ 17 ♗h1 ♙d6 18 ♖e4 – even though the pawn sacrifice doesn't look correct: 18...♖xe4 19 ♗xe4 ♖f6 20 ♗f3 ♙e5.

16 ♙h6 ♙fe8

17 ♗d2?!

At this point 17 a4!, to restrict his opponent's queenside play, was imperative.

17 ... ♙d6

With his thematic move Black counters his opponent's elementary threats of 18 d6 and 18 ♖f5.

18 g3 b5

19 ♙f3

If 19 ♖f5, then 19...b4 is unpleasant.

19 ... b4

19...♖e5 also deserved attention.

20 ♖e2

White reckons on creating counterplay after a3 or ♖f5.

20 ... ♖e4

Again Black had a chance to play 20...♖e5. The text-move allows White to bring his king's knight into the game and strengthen his position.

21 ♖c2 ♖df6

22 ♖g2!

The knight is heading for e3, and on to c4 if the opportunity arises.

22 ... ♖d7

23 ♖e3

In the event of 23 ♖f4, Black planned to decline the bishop exchange by 23...♖f8!, with somewhat the better chances.

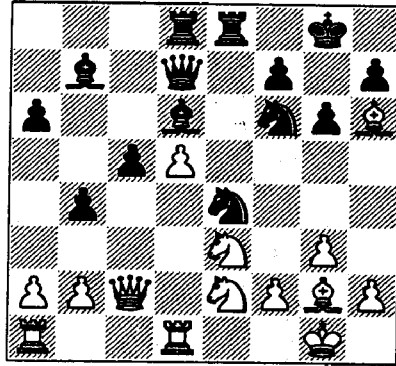
23 ... ♖ad8

Zviagintsev brings his last reserves into the battle. The combination 23...♖xf2? 24 ♖xf2 ♖h3 25 ♖f4 ♖xf4 was premature on account of 26 ♖xf4 (but not 26 gxf4 ♖xe3! 27 ♖xe3 ♖g4+). Black also gains nothing from 23...♖h3 24 ♖f4 ♖ad8 25 ♖c4.

24 ♖g2? (D)

White covers the h3-square, and in some lines threatens f2-f3. However, despite its natural appearance, this manoeuvre proves to have a tactical flaw. There was not much promise in 24 ♖f4 ♖f8 either, as on 25 ♖c4 Black has the simple 25...♖xd5. White should have followed his opponent's example and brought his rook into play, because the sacrifice on f2 doesn't yet work: 24 ♖ac1 ♖xf2?

25 ♖xf2 ♖h3 26 ♖f4 ♖xh2+ 27 ♖g2 ♖xf4 28 ♖xf4.

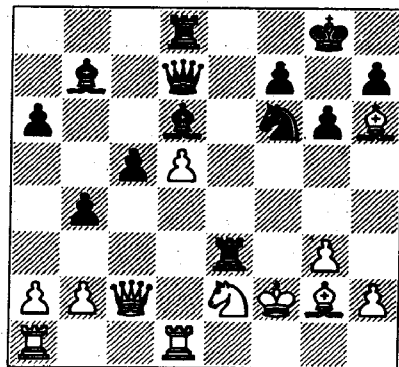


B

24 ... ♖xf2!

This sacrifice is merely the prelude to the real combinative fireworks. The white king is drawn into the centre, into the line of fire of the black pieces.

25 ♖xf2 ♖xe3! (D)



W

26 ♖xe3?!

If White had foreseen the fate in store for him, he would surely have preferred 26 ♖xe3 ♖g4+ 27 ♖d2 ♖xh6 28 ♖c1 ♖e7 – though even then the chances are with Black, who has a pawn for the exchange and good attacking prospects.

26 ... ♖g4+

27 ♖f3 ♖xh2+

28 ♖f2 ♖g4+

29 ♖f3

White was probably hoping his opponent would repeat moves; after all, Black is a rook down! However, Zviagintsev keeps finding new attacking resources.

29 ... ♖e6!

30 ♖f4

Although this move loses, it should perhaps not be condemned. Other continuations would most probably have led to the same result:

a) 30 ♖e4 ♖xe4+ 31 ♖xe4 ♖e8+.

b) 30 ♖c1 c4! 31 ♖e4 (or 31 ♖f4 ♖h2+ 32 ♖f2 ♖c5+ and mates) 31...♖xe4+ 32 ♖xe4 ♖f2+ 33 ♖d4 ♖xd1 with a material and positional plus.

c) 30 ♖g5 ♖e7 31 ♖f4 ♖e3+ 32 ♖xg4 ♖c8+ 33 ♖e6 ♖xg5+ 34 ♖f3 ♖xe6 with a winning attack.

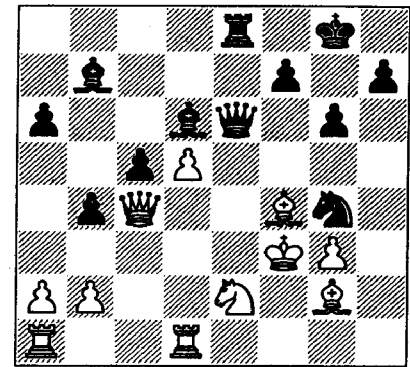
30 ... ♖e8!

This looks the most energetic way to continue the attack. Instead,

30...♖xd5+ 31 ♖xd5 ♖xd5+ 32 ♖e4 was clearly weaker, though 30...♖xf4 31 ♖e4!? ♖xe4+ 32 ♖xe4 ♖g5 and also 30...f5!? were perfectly playable alternatives.

31 ♖c4 (D)

There is no other defence against 31...♖xd5+.



B

31 ... ♖e3+!!

The most elegant solution, leading to a forced mate – although the prosaic 31...♖xf4 would also have won:

a) 32 gxf4 ♖e3+ 33 ♖xg4 ♖c8+ 34 f5 (34 ♖h4 ♖f2+ 35 ♖g3 ♖e3) 34...♖xf5+ 35 ♖h4 ♖f2+ 36 ♖g3 ♖e3.

b) 32 ♖xf4 ♖h2+ 33 ♖f2 ♖e3#.

In my view, a dual solution like this hardly detracts from the aesthetic effect of Zviagintsev's wonderful attack.

32 ♖xe3

Mate follows even more quickly after 32 ♖xg4 ♖c8+ 33 ♖g5 (33 ♖h4 ♖e7+) 33... ♖e5+.

32 ... ♖xe3+

33 ♖xg4 ♖c8+

34 ♖g5

Or 34 ♖h4 ♖e7#.

34 ... ♖h6+!

The finishing touch; 34... ♖g7 would have prolonged the game in view of 35 ♖h1 (or 35 ♖xc5):

35 ♖xh6 ♖e5

0-1

There is no defence against mate next move (... ♖f8# or ... ♖h5#).

Solutions to Chapter 1 Exercises

1. Berg-Hort, Biel 1985

Black has the advantage as his king is more active. His basic threat is ... ♖c6-b5. White's main counterchance lies in the pawn-break g3-g4!, but at the present moment it clearly fails. It can only be carried out with the white king on the e-file. In that position the king is within one move of stopping Black from queening a pawn on either the c-file or the g-file.

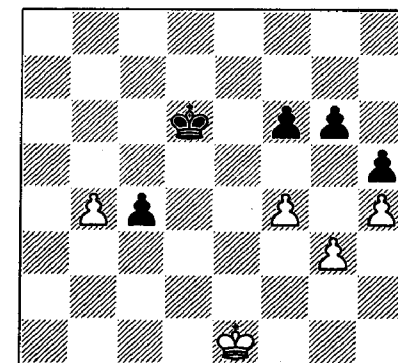
The most natural king move, 1 ♖e3?, proves weakest, since after 1... ♖c6! 2 g4 hxg4 3 f5 gxf5 4 h5 f4+! it is not hard to see that Black will queen first. Nor does it help to play 2 ♖d2 ♖b5 3 g4 (3 ♖c3 f5) 3... hxg4 4 f5 g3, or 2 ♖e2 ♖b5 3 g4 f5!.

The drawback to having the king on e3, then, is that White exposes himself to the tempo-gaining ... f5-f4+. Realizing this, White played 1 ♖e2? (with a view to the drawing line 1... ♖c6? 2 g4! hxg4 3 f5). However, after 1... ♖d5! he unexpectedly found himself in zugzwang. We already know what happens after 2 ♖e3 ♖c6 or 2 ♖d2

♖c6, while if 2 ♖e1 Black wins with 2...c3. The game continuation was 2 g4 hxg4 3 f5 g3! 4 fxg6 g2 5 ♖f2 ♖e6 6 g7 ♖f7 0-1. White resigned in view of 7 b5 c3 8 b6 c2 9 b7 g1 ♖+! 10 ♖xg1 c1 ♖+.

There is nevertheless a way for White to save himself:

1 ♖e1!! (D)



B

1 ... ♖c6

After 1... ♖d5 2 ♖e2! we reach the same zugzwang position as before, but this time it is Black's move. Now 2... ♖c6 is answered by 3 g4!. If instead 2... ♖d4, White should not play 3 g4? f5 4 gxf5 gxf5 5 ♖d2 c3+ 6 ♖c2 ♖c4 7 b5

♙xb5 8 ♙xc3 ♙c5, but simply 3 ♙d2! with a draw.

2 g4! hxg4
2...f5 3 gxf5 gxf5 4 ♙d2.
3 f5 gxf5
4 h5 g3
4...c3 5 h6 c2 6 ♙d2 leads to similar play.

5 h6 g2
6 ♙f2 c3
7 h7 c2
8 h8♙ g1♙+
9 ♙xg1 c1♙+
10 ♙f2

The position is drawn.

King and pawn endings are an excellent training ground for the technique of analysing variations!

2. Bobrov-Platonov, Chernovtsy 1963

1 ♙h5

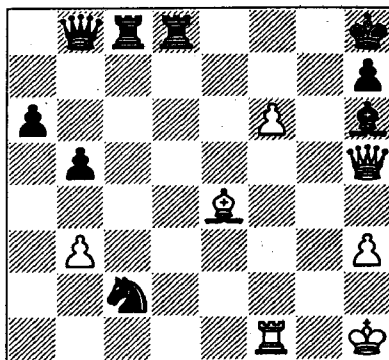
This occurred in the game.

1 ... ♙xg5
2 ♙e4 ♙h6!! (D)

There is no doing without this move; on 2...♙c7, 2...♙a7, 2...♙c7 or 2...♙d7 White plays 3 f7.

It is very important to find out at once which attacking line White is going to choose: 3 ♙xh6 or 3 ♙f5.

If 3 ♙f5, then 3...♙c7? 4 f7 ♙xf7 5 ♙xf7 is hopeless for Black. However, he has the pretty defence 3...♙d7!! 4 ♙xd7 (4 f7 ♙xf7 5



W

♙xf7 ♙c7 or 5...♙c7) 4...♙c7!?, and White's attack peters out (after 4...♙c7 5 ♙xc7 ♙xc7 6 f7 he still has some saving chances based on 6...♙f8 7 ♙c1).

3 ♙xh6 ♙c7!!

Not, of course, 3...♙d7? 4 f7 ♙xf7 5 ♙xf7. However, following the text-move, after 4 f7 Black wins with 4...♙xf7 5 ♙xf7 ♙d1+ 6 ♙g2 ♙g8+. White actually played 4 ♙xc2 and resigned after 4...♙b7+.

Conclusion: the tempting combination 1 ♙h5? is unsound. White should simply have played 1 ♙h5, maintaining a strong attack.

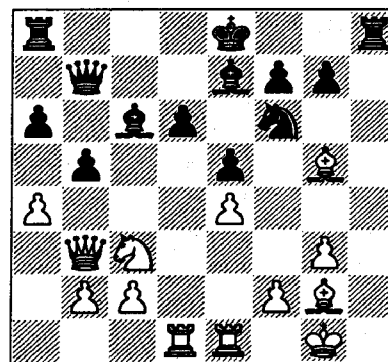
3. Jansa-A. Sokolov, Biel-Interzonal 1985

White wants to play his bishop to g5. The only question is whether to do it at once or after exchanging pawns on the queenside.

In the game, White played 19 axb5?! axb5 (19...exf4? 20 bxc6 is bad for Black) 20 ♙g5 (20 ♙d2 was worth considering, for example 20...b4 21 ♙d5 and the b4-pawn is attacked, or 20...0-0 21 ♙g5!?) 20...b4! 21 ♙xf6 bxc3 (otherwise 22 ♙d5 with advantage) 22 ♙xe7 ♙xb3 (but not 22...♙xe7? 23 ♙xc3) 23 cxb3 ♙xe7 24 bxc3 ♙a3! 25 b4! (25 ♙b1 ♙b8) 25...♙xc3 26 ♙c1 ♙xc1 27 ♙xc1 ♙d7 with equality.

Now let us look at the immediate 19 ♙g5.

19 ♙g5! (D)



B

19 ... b4
20 ♙xf6 bxc3
21 ♙xe7 ♙xb3
21...♙xe7 22 ♙xc3 ♙xa4 23 ♙a3 is no better for Black.
22 cxb3 ♙xe7
23 bxc3

In contrast to the game continuation, the a-file is closed and White keeps his extra pawn.

Let us see whether avoiding the pawn exchange gives the opponent any new possibilities. Black can try 19...♙d7, counting on 20 ♙xe7? ♙c5! 21 ♙a2 (21 ♙b4 a5!) 21...♙xe7 with a good game. However, the intermediate exchange 20 axb5! puts Black in a difficult position, for example 20...♙xg5 21 bxc6, or 20...axb5 21 ♙xe7 ♙c5 22 ♙b4.

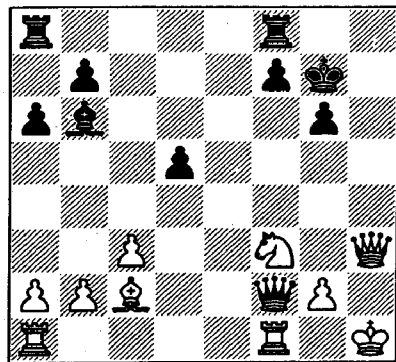
He probably ought to choose 19...bxa4!? 20 ♙xb7 ♙xb7, though after 21 ♙xf6 gxf6 (21...♙xf6 22 ♙xd6) 22 ♙xa4 White has the better endgame chances. For example 22...♙c8 23 ♙c3, followed by ♙d2 and ♙d1-e3.

4. Timoshchenko-Vaganian, USSR Championship, First League, Baku 1977

Black's h6-pawn is *en prise*. He can defend it with his king, but should also consider the active continuations 20...♙xh3 and 20...♙g3.

Vaganian decided on a combination without working out its consequences to the end: 20...♙xh3? 21 ♙xh6 (threatening both 22 ♙xh3 and 22 ♙g5) 21...♙g3 22 ♙xh3 ♙xf2+ (22...♙xf2+ 23 ♙f1 ♙xe1 24 ♙xe1 is unsatisfactory for

Black) 23 ♖h1 ♗g7 (23... ♗xc2 24 ♕g5!). Now the threats of 24... ♖h8 and 24... ♗xc2 look dangerous, but White goes over to the counter-attack: 24 ♖f1! (D)



B

24... ♗xc2 25 ♕g5 ♖f2 (25... ♖h8 26 ♖xf7+ ♗g8 27 ♖h7!) 26 ♗h7+ ♗f6 27 ♗h4! ♖h8 28 ♖xf2+ 1-0. Black resigned due to 28... ♗xf2 29 ♕h7+ and 30 ♗xf2.

From the test position, Black has two other continuations of roughly equal value:

a) 20... ♗g7!? 21 ♖e5 (21 ♖ad1? ♕xh3) 21... ♕c6.

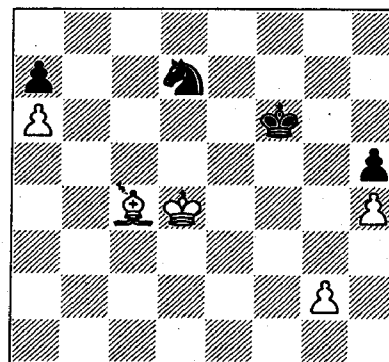
b) 20... ♗g3!? 21 ♕d4! (the alternative 21 ♗xh6? fails against 21... ♕xf2+ 22 ♗h1 ♕xe1 and then 23 ♕g5 ♗h4 or 23 ♖xe1 ♖fe8) 21... ♗h4.

In either variation Black stands worse but is quite able to defend himself.

Solutions to Chapter 4 Exercises

1. Smyslov-Gurgenidze, USSR Championship, Tbilisi 1966

45 h4! (D)



B

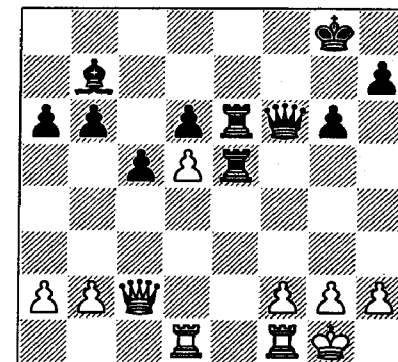
It is essential to fix the black pawn on the vulnerable square h5, so as to attack it with the bishop and create a dangerous passed h-pawn when the occasion arises. Black will scarcely be able to guard both his weaknesses, a7 and h5. White should win.

The game continuation was 45 ♕d5? h4! 46 ♖e2 ♕f8 47 ♗e4 (if White goes after the a-pawn, his king will be shut in the corner by ... ♕c7) 47... ♕g5 48 ♕d5 ♗f6 49

♕g4 ♕g6 with a clear draw. When a passed h-pawn appears, Black will be able to give up his knight for it, provided his king can get back to b8.

2. Jochelson-Belavenets, correspondence 1974-9

25 ... ♖8xe6! (D)



W

26 dxe6 ♗f3!!
0-1

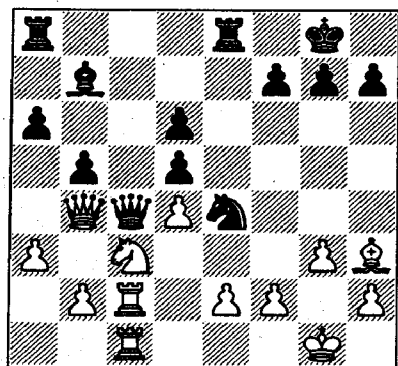
(With most of these exercises the answer consists of a single move, but sometimes it's a continuation of two moves or more. In such cases the trainer makes the reply and starts the clock again –

and so on until the full solution is played out.)

3. Beliavsky-Chernin, Tunis Interzonal 1985

If 21 ♖xc4 dxc4, Black would stand quite well.

21 ♖b4! (D)



B

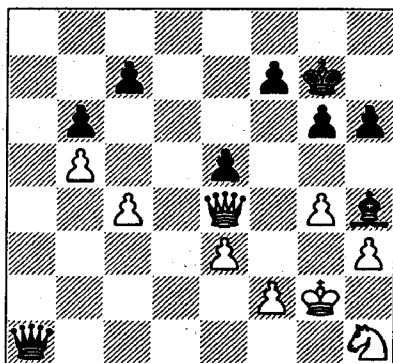
White has in mind 21... ♖xc3 22 ♖xc3 and then 22... ♖xe2 23 ♖c7 ♖e7 24 ♖xd6 or 22... ♖xb4 23 axb4 ♖xe2 24 ♖c7 ♖b8 25 ♖xb7, winning. He also has a plus after 21... ♖xb4 22 axb4 ♖f6 23 e3 ♖e7 24 ♖e2 g5 25 ♖c8!.

In the game followed 21... a5 22 ♖xb5 ♖xc3 23 ♖xc4 dxc4 24 bxc3 ♖ab8 25 ♖d7! ♖e7 26 ♖a4 ♖d5 27 g4! g6 28 f3 f5 29 gxf5 gxf5 30 ♖f2 ♖f7 31 ♖g3 ♖f6 32 ♖f4 ♖f7 33 ♖g1 ♖g6 34 h4, and White successfully exploited his extra pawn.

4. Miles-Makarychev, Oslo 1984

White's queen is almost in a position to attack the black queenside pawns, but first he has to forestall his opponent's kingside counterplay. 37 ♖c6? is premature in view of 37... ♖xg3 38 ♖xg3 ♖g1+, and 37 ♖f1? ♖b2 is similarly useless. On 37 ♖e2? Black has 37... ♖e1! (38 ♖xe5+?? fails to 38... ♖f6).

37 ♖h1!! (D)



B

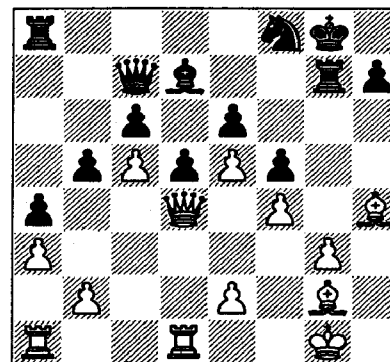
Threatening 38 ♖c6 with advantage. The game went 37... ♖b2 38 ♖c6 ♖b1 39 ♖xc7 ♖e4+ 40 ♖h2 h5 41 ♖c6 ♖c2 42 gxf5 ♖f5 43 ♖g2!? ♖xh5 44 c5!, and White won.

5. Pinter-Larsen, Las Palmas 1982

Obviously White should prepare active operations on the kingside.

However, the hasty 25 ♖f2? would come up against the exchange sacrifice 25... ♖xg5! 26 fxg5 ♖g6, making the position unclear.

25 ♖h4! (D)

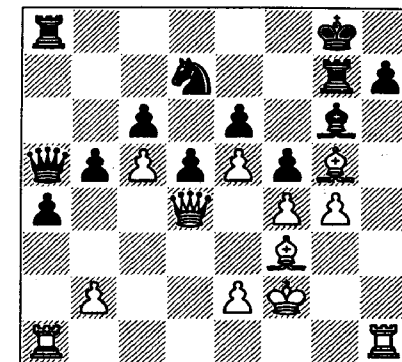


B

Putting paid to the threatened sacrifice. If now 25... ♖g6, then 26 ♖f6; otherwise White will play ♖f2 and ♖f3, concentrate his forces on

the kingside and prepare to break with g3-g4.

25... ♖e8 26 ♖f3 ♖d7 27 ♖f2 ♖g6 28 ♖h1 ♖f7 29 ♖g5 ♖a5 30 g4! ♖g8? (D) (30... fxf4 31 ♖xg4 ♖e4 is more tenacious)



W

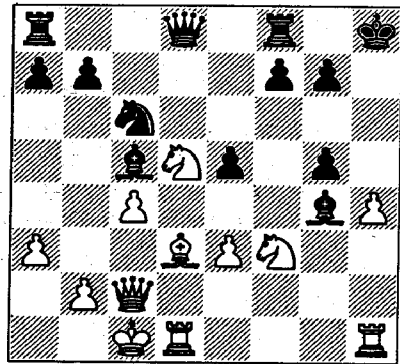
31 ♖f6 ♖f7 32 gxf5 exf5 33 ♖h5! ♖xf6 34 exf6, and Black is defenceless.

Solutions to Chapter 11 Exercises

1. Forintos-Zedek, Imperia 1991

White needs to open the h-file for attack, but 17 h4? is answered by 17...g4!. The object of attack must first be fixed.

17 g4! ♖xg4
18 h4! (D)

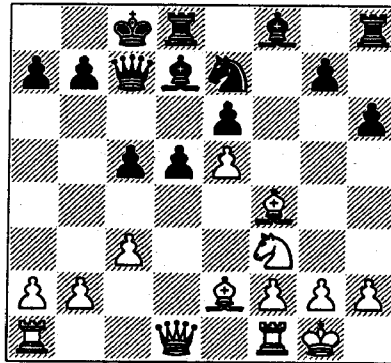


B

In the game, Black resigned after the further moves 18...f5 19 hxg5+ ♖g8 20 g6 ♖xe3+ 21 ♖xe3 ♖f6 1-0.

2. Kholmov-Naumkin, Moscow Championship 1983

12 ... h6! (D)



W

Black aims to play ...g5, not only starting an offensive against the king but also preparing to attack the e5-pawn by means of ...♖g6, and ...♗g7, followed if necessary by ...g4 or ...h5. White is powerless to stop this plan.

13 h4 g5!

14 hxg5 ♖g6
Black has obtained a big advantage.

15 ♗g3 ♗e7! 16 ♖d3 ♖dg8 17 c4 dxc4 18 ♖xc4 hxg5 19 ♖b3 ♖f4 20 ♖fd1 ♖g6! 21 ♖xf4 gxf4 22 a4 ♖hg8 23 ♖f1 ♖b8! 24 a5 ♖c6 25 a6 ♖xg2 26 ♖xe6 ♖h4 27 ♖d2 ♖xf3 28 ♖xg8 ♖g1+! 0-1

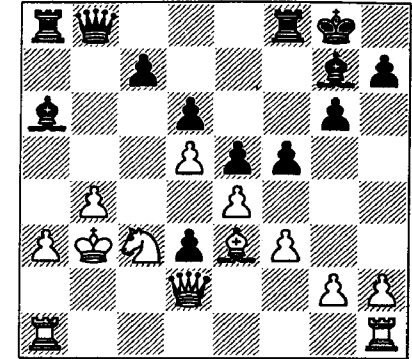
3. A. Petrosian-Beliavsky, Riga 1973

In the Sämisch Variation of the King's Indian, as in certain other openings, we sometimes witness a strange scenario. After castling long, White conducts a queenside attack, advancing the pawns in front of his own king – while Black attacks on the kingside. (The classic instance of this strategy is Kotov-Szabo, Zurich Candidates tournament 1953.) At first sight the actions of both players seem paradoxical, but the explanation is simple. Each player attacks on the wing where he is stronger – where he controls more space (as determined by the central pawn structure) and has more pieces.

In the position in front of you, White has a clear plan – to advance his pawns to a4 and b5, then pick up the d3-pawn. However, the enemy bishop must first be deprived of the c4-square. This can only be

done by the king, which strides boldly forward.

23 ♖b3! (D)



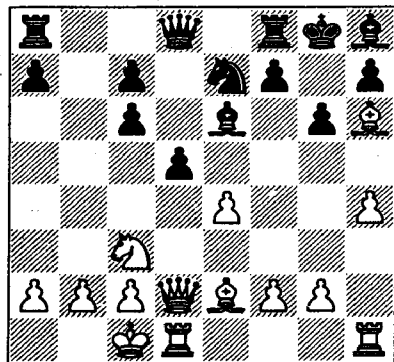
B

The advance of the white pawns cannot be stemmed. Beliavsky's attempts to complicate are unsuccessful: 23...♖c8 24 a4 c6 25 dxc6 ♖xc6 26 b5 d5 27 ♖xd5 ♖f8 28 ♖xd3 ♖d6 29 ♖b2! ♖b8 30 ♖hc1, and White won.

4. Liublinsky-Simagin, Moscow 1939

12 ... ♗h8! (D)

A positional exchange sacrifice – typical of this kind of structure – which occurred several times in Simagin's games. Black needs his bishop much more than his inactive rook. The bishop will be useful both for defending its own king and for attacking the opponent's.



W

13 ♖xf8 ♜xf8
14 a3?

Except when strictly necessary, you should not make pawn moves on the part of the board where you are weaker. 14 ♖a4 is better.

14 ... ♜b8

The rook co-operates splendidly with the bishop; the two pieces exert tremendous pressure against b2. White's position is probably hopeless already.

15 ♔d3 c5! 16 exd5 ♖xd5 17 ♖a4 ♔d7! 18 ♜a5 ♖xa4 19 ♜xa4 ♜h6+ 20 f4 ♖xf4 21 ♔d2 ♖xb2+ 22 ♖d1 ♖c3 23 ♔f2 ♜b1# (0-1)

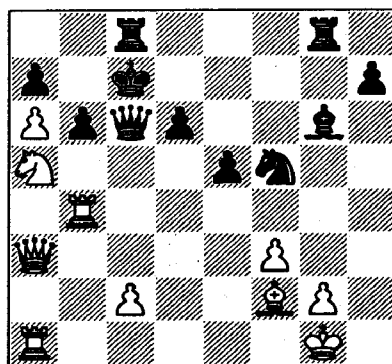
5. Van der Wiel-Larsen, Reykjavik 1985

In the 'normal' course of events White has no proper compensation

for his pawn, as the actual game continuation showed: 31 ♖d2? ♖f7 32 ♜d3 ♖e6 33 ♖c4 ♜d5! 34 ♖xb6+ (desperation; 34 ♜f1 ♖d4 is quite hopeless for White) 34...axb6 35 ♜xd5 ♖xd5 36 ♖xb6 ♖xf3 37 ♖f2 ♖c6! 38 g4 ♜cf8 39 gxf5 ♜xf5+ 40 ♖e3 ♜g2! 0-1.

White's best chance was to sharpen the play by sacrificing a piece:

31 ♖a5! (D)



B

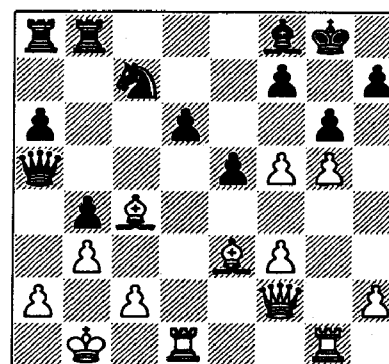
For example, 31...bxa5 32 ♜b7+ ♖d8 33 ♜xa5+ ♖e8 34 ♜xa7 with a position difficult to assess.

6. Pcholkin-Tolonen, Russian Correspondence Championship 1980-3

One of the most difficult questions in chess is how to combine attack and defence correctly,

avoiding both the Scylla of excessive caution and the Charybdis of over-aggression which borders on recklessness.

23 ... g6! (D)



W

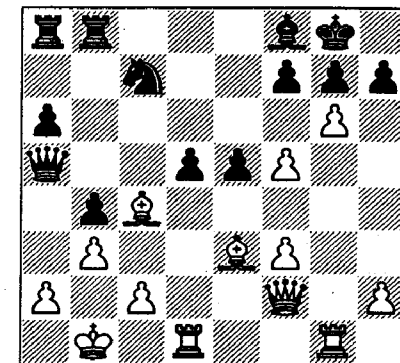
By defending against White's threat g5-g6, Black maintains an excellent position. White will have to give very serious thought to the threats of 24...d5 and 24...♖b5.

On the other hand if Black is impatient and tries to carry out one of these threats at once, he allows White to launch a dangerous attack against the king, which outweighs Black's queenside operations. For instance, 23...♖b5? 24 g6! ♖a3+ (24...♖c3+ 25 ♖c1) 25 ♖a1 ♖xc4 26 ♜h4, threatening to give mate or take on c4 with the queen.

Instead Black played 23...d5?, when White should have continued 24 g6!! In the game, White

shied away from the piece sacrifice and chose 24 ♔d3?. There followed: 24...g6 25 ♜g3 ♖b5 26 ♜h3 ♜a3!? (26...♖c3+!?) 27 ♖xb5 axb5 28 c3 bxc3 29 ♜xd5 ♜d8 30 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 31 ♖c1 ♜a6 32 f4 ♜c8 33 ♜c2 exf4 34 ♜xc3, with a roughly equal game.

The variations after 24 g6!! (D) are as follows:



B

24 ... dxc4

If 24...fxg6 25 fxg6 hxg6, then 26 ♜xd5! ♖xd5 27 ♔d1 ♜b5 28 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 29 ♖b6 and White wins.

25 ♜h4 fxg6
26 fxg6 h6

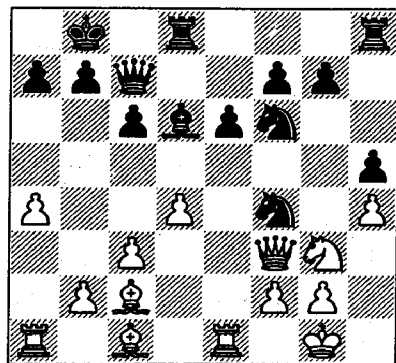
Nor is 26...hxg6 any better: 27 ♜xc4+ ♖h8 28 ♜g3.

27 ♖xh6! gxh6
28 g7

and White's attack is irresistible.

7. Simagin-Petrosian, Moscow 1956

17 h4! (D)



B

A good example of astute prophylaxis with the kings on opposite sides! "This move looks risky, but is just the way to paralyse Black's kingside attack" (Simagin). The important thing is to deprive the opponent of ...h4 or ...g5. To this end, it is even permissible to violate the principle stated in our comments on another Simagin game (see exercise 4). Possessing two powerful bishops, White has the better chances. He threatens c4-c5. Instead, the immediate 17 c4 g5! 18 c5 e7 19 e4 gxf4 (19...xf4) 20 e2 is only sufficient for equality.

17...d4d5 18 e4 e4 19 e4 e4 20 c2 g4 21 g3

18 e8 22 a5! e5 23 g5! f6 24 d2 (threatening 25 g6) 24...exd4 25 cxd4 e1+ 26 e1 c5! 27 a6! cxd4 28 a5?!

A tempting move, but not the best. 28 e4! was stronger, for example 28...bxa6 29 d3 b6 30 g2! with a decisive attack.

28...b6 29 d2 e5 30 g2 d3 31 a4

We have now reached the position in the next exercise.

8. Simagin-Petrosian, Moscow 1956

All White has to do is play 32 c1, and Black will be in a bad way in spite of his extra pawn. Let us see how the game concluded:

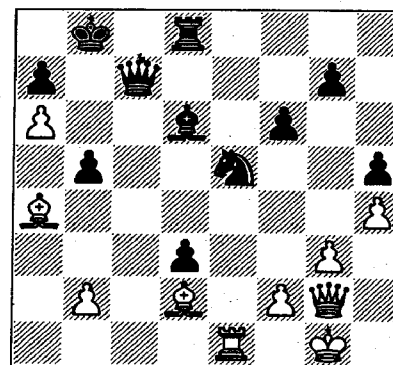
31...c5? 32 c1 f7 33 b4 d4 34 b3 e7 35 f4 b5 36 c6 d7 37 e4 b6 38 d1 e8 39 xd3 c8 40 f7 e7 41 xh5 c4 42 h7! (42 f3!?) 42...c7 43 d2 xb4 44 g8 d7 45 c2+ c5 46 a8 d6 47 d2+ d4 48 e3 e6 49 e8+ f5 50 g4+ e4 51 a8+ d5 52 xd4+ 1-0

With 31...c8, Black could have stopped the enemy rook from occupying the c-file (32 c1? xc1+ 33 xc1 xc1+ 34 h2 g4+ 35 h3 h1+! 36 xh1 xf2+), but after the reply 32 b5!? his position would still have been difficult

due to the exposed position of his king and his lack of any real counterplay.

Only a player who sensed the full strategic danger of Black's position could resolve to complicate with 31...b5. After all, he would have to reckon with the seemingly deadly reply a5. In actual fact, that move is dubious; while winning the exchange, White removes the blockade from the strong passed pawn on d3.

31 ... b5!! (D)



W

32 xb5

If 32 a5, then 32...c6! 33 xc6 (33 xd8 can be met by 33...bxa4 or 33...f3+ 34 h1 bxa4) 33...xc6 34 xd8 bxa4! 35 e6 (35 e8 xd8 36 xd8+ c7) 35...e5 with advantage to Black.

32 ... b6

Black needs to eliminate the white a-pawn. Again the bishop sortie to a5 is not dangerous.

33 a5?! xb5

34 xd8 d2!

But not 34...xa6? 35 d5, nor 34...c6? 35 e8.

35 d1 b3

36 b7+

The exchange of queens is forced. Neither 36 xd2? f3+ nor 36 f1? c5 is any good.

36 ... xb7

37 axb7 b4

What is White to do now? The threat is not only 38...c4, but also 38...c6 trapping the bishop. A good example of an opportune counter-attack.

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